THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

Vol. 13 *Spring* · 1944 *No.* 2

Editorial	*Christian Gauss*
Which Are the Liberating Arts?	*John Herman Randall, Jr.*
Democracy and the Negro	*Otelia Cromwell*
Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet	*B. H. Haggin*
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New Dimensions and the Arts	*William Sener Rusk*
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Weighing the Earth	*Paul R. Heyl*

From the Workshop

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Our Readers Comment *Our Authors*

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

Emerson said, "The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be an university of knowledges. . . . This confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar."

The name of this quarterly is the title of Ralph Waldo Emerson's Phi Beta Kappa address delivered at Harvard in 1837, called by James Russell Lowell "an event without any former parallel in our literary annals," and by Oliver Wendell Holmes "our intellectual Declaration of Independence."

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

Spring · 1944 **CONTENTS** *Vol. 13 · No. 2*

Editorial . . . . . *Christian Gauss* 133
Which Are the Liberating Arts? . . *John Herman Randall, Jr.* 135
Democracy and the Negro . . . . *Otelia Cromwell* 149
Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet . . . . . *B. H. Haggin* 162
Federation or Cooperation: The Scandinavian Experience . . *C. J. Hambro* 171
American Readers and Books . . . *Dorothy Canfield Fisher* . 179
Three Poems . . . . . *Will Gibson* 192
New Dimensions and the Arts . . . *William Sener Rusk* . . . 193
The Peshtigo Fire . . . . . *Stewart Holbrook* 201
Cooperative Research . . . . . *Caryl P. Haskins* 210
The Faith of the Scholar . . . . . *Norman Foerster* 224
Weighing the Earth . . . . . *Paul R. Heyl* 234

FROM THE WORKSHOP

Our Unknown Enemy . . . . . *D. H. M.* 241
Oliver Wendell Holmes Still the Poet Laureate at Eighty-Four . . . . *Miriam Rossiter Small* . . 244

OUR READERS COMMENT

On "The Humanities in the Americas" *Walter M. Brandow* . . . 247
On "Why 100,000,000 Americans Read Comics" . . . . . *Harold C. Field* 247
Cleanth Brooks & Robert B. Heilman . . . 248
On "Of the Librarian's Education" . *Joseph L. Werner* 251
On "The Anglo-American Future" . *F. R. Flournoy* 251

OUR AUTHORS 253

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 13 *Spring 1944* NUMBER 2

Editorial

Christian Gauss

GENTLE reader, be not too gentle!

Editors of antediluvian reviews used to address their subscriber as "gentle reader." They did that because they feared the reader would not be gentle, that he might kick over the traces and cancel his subscription. THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is not like those reviews. The members of your Editorial Board are not like those editors. They want you to realize more fully that THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is not run for profit. It is not run for the Editorial Board. It is run for you. It believes far more than such old fashioned magazines in self-determination. It believes that readers make magazines. It holds with the poet that they also serve, or *can* serve, who only sit and read — providing they do something about it.

The article by C. J. Hambro in this number reminds your Editorial Board of their first plans and program. He tells how in the Scandinavian countries peoples of diverging interests developed the sense of common cause. He tells how their magazine, *Le Nord*, played no little role in this process. In another field our hopes were not unlike theirs. When Phi Beta Kappa founded THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR it was not starting just one more magazine. It was founded to meet the more particular needs of liberally educated men. The founders knew that specialists like chemists, philologians, biologists, philosophers, had technical journals to help push out the frontiers of knowledge in restricted areas. But they knew also that not even all Phi Beta Kappas are specialists — and whether specialists or not, liberally educated men have a particular interest in the general advancement of science and learning.

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They would, therefore, welcome presentations of significant developments like that of Caryl P. Haskins on "Cooperative Research." They would be particularly concerned with problems of education like "Which Are the Liberating Arts?" by our former colleague, John Herman Randall, Jr., like B. H. Haggin's "Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet," like William Sener Rusk's "New Dimensions and the Arts." They would wish to know how persons with particular competence and experience, like Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Otelia Cromwell, Norman Foerster, and Stewart Holbrook, feel about specific contemporary American problems. Our most important problems are our unsolved ones. Their discussion involves approaches and opinions with which not all readers will agree. Your particular experience in some cases will have given you light on another facet of that problem. Do not hide it under your private bushel.

The Editorial Board has no desire to create a bloc. It does hope to strengthen the sense of common cause among its readers. More can be done by THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR if you help the Board to clarify what are the legitimate areas of agreement and disagreement. As the Frenchmen say, *c'est du choc des opinions que jaillit la vérité.* When tempted to disagree, do not stay your hand.

Gentle reader, be not too gentle!

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Which Are the Liberating Arts?

John Herman Randall, Jr.

IT IS sometimes claimed that only the true philosopher is adequately equipped to deal with the fundamental problems of education. A member of the guild myself, I am, I confess, somewhat inclined to admit the impeachment. I should prefer to state it, however, in this fashion: any man who can really consider education adequately is *ipso facto* a true philosopher. And I must in all fairness hasten to add, with regret, that such men are as rare in the ranks of professional teachers of philosophy as in any other.

This is really a serious matter. There was never a time when it was more necessary for us all to reconsider what a college education should do and give, both to those who suffer and to those who perpetrate it; and in the light of that function clearly conceived, to examine how to do it most effectively.

Some years ago Count Keyserling pointed out that in our modern technological world, the typical figure has come to be the chauffeur — and in view of our economic arrangements, the chauffeur doffing his cap to his employer. Today, of course, the chauffeur is apt to be driving a tank, and saluting his superior officer — or piloting a bomber, and dropping blockbusters on civilian populations. This observation of the peripatetic Count can well serve as the symbol of what our civilization has made, and is today making, of its young men. We are succeeding pretty well in training competent technicians, men who know how to do some one thing with great skill — and who know very little else, not even why they are doing what they are doing so competently. The universal reports from our armed forces seem to indicate that their members show almost no understanding of why they are manipulating their marvelous gadgets and applying their remarkable techniques so effectively. This is to say nothing of the lack of comprehension and vision displayed by the men re-

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sponsible for our really breath-taking peacetime techniques.

Dr. A. D. Lindsay, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, lecturing in this country last year, described with powerful effect the state of mind of German airmen shot down and made prisoners of war in England. They showed almost uniformly an extraordinary competence in the technical arts for which they had been trained. At the same time they seemed to be wholly uneducated; they were completely unaware of reasons for what they were doing, and accepted their military orders without question. The officers of the British Army who examined these prisoners were appalled at the emptiness they discovered. Lest British soldiers display a similar ignorance, they initiated a thoroughgoing program of discussion groups in the British Army, with the result that the British armed forces have probably given more thought to the meaning of their activities than has any army since the days of Cromwell. They have insisted that their officers should have at least a year at the University, a year not of technical training but of liberal education; and, being British, they have recommended that classical studies are probably best for the purpose.

As we look about our college campuses today, I can only wonder whether we too shall have reason to regret what our surrender to the seeming insistences of the moment has done to our programs of education. But it is not my intention to raise here the question of the long-term consequences of our abandonment of all pretense at giving our young men an education. The results of that policy will be what they will be. Had our army and our navy possessed more wisdom — had they had even the experience granted the British services — had we all been more far-sighted and more insistent — we might have proceeded in a less blundering fashion to make use of what American colleges had to teach. But there is a still more serious problem — what are we going to do when this war is over?

On this question there is need for the most considered kind of stocktaking and reflection. Fortunately, most of our colleges are already engaged upon this essential task. I am myself a member of some five different committees devoted to the reorganization of various parts of the program of my own institution. For one

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who has always felt that the core of "academic freedom" is closely bound up with the primary "freedom from committees," this is really going some. But it seems clearly a time when all considerations of personal freedom should be subordinated to the demands of academic responsibility.

This interest in education on the college level has been recently signalized by a number of thoughtful books. During the past year or two there have appeared Alexander Meiklejohn's *Education between Two Worlds*, Jacques Maritain's *Education at the Crossroads*, Mark Van Doren's *Liberal Education*, Werner Jaeger's *Humanism and Theology*, and T. M. Greene's *Liberal Education Reëxamined*. I don't, of course, agree with all the conclusions and recommendations of these several books. No one, fortunately, could possibly agree with the recommendations of any two of them. But they all help to clarify the problem of what education should be and do. If the course that books of this character recommend seems rather backwardlooking and traditional — like the program earlier advanced by President Hutchins of Chicago — it is well to remember that it is far easier to regret wistfully something lost and probably impossible of recapture, than to look forward to what we can hope to accomplish under the conditions of a new day.

What is it that we Americans really want from this business of education? Do we want to go on turning out skilled technicians, as we are doing right now? Do we want to educate men, as we used to try to do, with, according at least to the *laudatores temporis acti*, some measure of success? Do we want to try to do both, rather ineffectively on the side of education, as we were doing before the war?

I assume we can take for granted that we Americans don't want to go on, any longer than we have to, training chauffeurs for tanks and bombers. And we have a deep aversion to training hired chauffeurs — at least the kind that doffs its cap. We want every man to own and drive his own car. But is that all we want? If it is, will the training sufficient to produce good drivers be enough to secure even that? Would you or I — would we Americans, mechanical-minded as we are — really be willing to have

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on our tombstones the eulogy, "He was a good driver"? Do we want to be known, among the peoples of the world and in the pages of history, as a nation of good drivers? What, after all, are we fighting this war for against a nation preëminent for its expert drivers and technicians? The Germans would doubtless be only too glad if we would so confine our interests. How long could a nation of "good drivers" hope to remain a nation?

I have a friend, a doctor, who is a genuine expert in his profession. He has also great technical competence in all things mechanical and electrical; he loves gadgets, is sure to have the very latest, and in his non-professional moments lives and thinks among them. I often suspect that nothing that is not distinctive of our machine age plays any vital part in his life or thought. He happens to be the salt of the earth. A nation made up of men like him would never intentionally injure another human being; it would be in very truth a good Samaritan among the peoples of the earth. But how long would such a nation remain without an aggressive leader and master? Would it have the knowledge, the education, to prevent its falling a prey to the first adventurer?

Of course, we Americans want to be more than good drivers — we want, and we have proclaimed it officially, to be a nation of "free men." And, should we ask ourselves what we mean when we say we want to be "free men," despite the complexities of the question I take it that we are in pretty substantial agreement. We want, first of all, not only the opportunity to make the most of ourselves — to do, under our social arrangements, all that we reasonably can, without let or hindrance. We want positively to be able to develop all our powers and capacities, to free all our best energies; we want the chance to become well-rounded, whole men, and not mere technicians.

We want, in the second place, to be free citizens in a free commonwealth; and we have come to realize pretty well that this means being responsible members of the community. If, in a society as complex as ours, the traffic rules must be extended — as we realize they must — if we must accept the responsibilities of planning and submitting to more cooperative control, we want to know why this is so. We want to know just who is doing the

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regulating and what ideas he has in mind, how far such regulation is really necessary, and at what point it is wiser to stop. We want to understand why we are doing what we must, and how we can do it most effectively and intelligently.

A short while ago I stood on Constitution Avenue, bordering the Mall in Washington, and looked at that imposing line of Roman façades, stretching away to the Capitol in the distance, mile on mile it seemed. That row of monumental government offices made me vividly aware of what it means to be the capital of a great modern technological nation. It suggested also those ideas that seem to be taking form in the minds of some Americans fascinated by the vision of its destiny that Washington generates: this was not only the capital of a great nation, it was about to become the capital of the world. I began to understand how a harried businessman must feel, coming to Washington to be overwhelmed by that symbol of impersonal power. How can free men use this power that God has bestowed upon them? Free men will have to understand what has been happening to this nation of farmers and traders, and why. Somehow they will have to learn how to deal with the problems its new role is creating for us all; they will have to learn how to assume the responsibilities of their power.

And finally, deep down in every American breast is the desire to possess a "free mind" — to understand our world and ourselves, to know why we are doing as we are, and what it is all worth. We want to understand why we must make the choices we must, and what our decision will bring. We want to live intelligently, not in thoughtless ignorance. We don't really want to be like our soldiers, whose one idea is reliably reported to be to get home again to things as they were — a state of affairs which will probably be quite impossible because of what they are so effectively doing.

We want, in brief, to be free men, free citizens, and free minds. We really want just what our best professors of education have been saying we want. We want to be made fit for such freedoms. We want a "liberal" education — "liberal" both in liberating the energies of the human personality, and in preparing free men

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to cooperate in a democratic community. We want an education "to guide man in the evolving dynamism through which he shapes himself as a human person — armed with knowledge, strength of judgment, and moral virtues — while at the same time conveying to him the spiritual heritage of the nation and the civilization in which he is involved, and preserving in this way the century-old achievements of generations." We believe that "education should essentially aim not at producing the type but at liberating the human person. . . . The great thing is the awakening of the inner resources and creativity." These statements are an admirable expression of the aim and genius of our best American philosophy of education; the words happen to be those of Jacques Maritain.

In our best schools, something of this aim has been measurably achieved, in elementary and secondary education. There has, of course, been a good deal of inevitable fumbling and forgetting. But the question I wish to press is, how can we hope to educate on the college level, free men, free citizens, and free minds?

The traditional answer has been, by giving them a "liberal" education, by training them in the "liberal" arts. Both terms sum up a long and interesting history. Originally, they meant the education and the arts appropriate to freemen, not the illiberal and servile arts of slaves — of those whom in our present situation we may call the mere technicians, the "living tools" Aristotle speaks of. The aim and function of this education and these arts was to cultivate in men what Cicero called "*humanitas*" and what the Greeks had called "*paedeia*." By *humanitas* Cicero meant the knowledge of what man is — his powers, his relations to his fellows and to Nature, and the knowledge of the limits of those human powers and of man's responsibilities. Education, he held, should put before men the ideal pattern of humanity, to stir and inspire imitation in the young — it should be the *studium humanitatis ac litterarum*.

Thus, by Cicero's day, what had started as the education of a privileged upper class had become something more. The arts that the Greeks — and, less successfully, the Romans — studied had passed from the status of a mere badge of class-distinction

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to the performance of a definite function. These arts were "liberal" because they were the most effective means of "liberating" men — because they succeeded in producing free men, free citizens, and free minds.

The early Middle Ages, having little but Roman experience to go upon, continued to teach and study what the Romans had studied: literature and mathematics, the three literary "liberal arts" of the trivium and the four mathematical "liberal arts" of the quadrivium — for the most part in late Roman textbooks. In view of the insistence with which the "trivialities" have been dinned into us of late, it is well to remember that just as soon as the Middle Ages discovered a biological, psychological, and social science — which they found in Aristotle by about 1250 — they made that science central in their studies and in their faculties of liberal arts. The educational program of President Hutchins of Chicago, preached at Yale and put into effect at St. John's College, seems thus to have about caught up with the best medieval practice in the early thirteenth century; it still remains definitely pre-Aristotelian and pre-Thomistic, explicitly so in the Augustinian philosophy of Scott Buchanan, Dean of St. John's.

The humanists of the Renaissance, lacking confidence in themselves, instead of studying, as did the men of the later Middle Ages, those arts and sciences which the ancients had found liberating, studied instead the ancients themselves. They organized "liberal education" in terms of the study of the Greek and Roman classics and mathematics, so effectively that when the new natural sciences burst in upon men's minds in the seventeenth century they were, with rare exceptions, excluded from the colleges and universities. It was not until the sixties, seventies, and eighties of the last century that the natural sciences once more became in our colleges what they had been in the best medieval teaching — truly "liberal" or liberating arts. It was not until the 1890's that the social sciences were likewise admitted to the status they had enjoyed during the post-thirteenth-century "Aristotelian" Middle Ages.

As taught in our American colleges one and two generations ago, these sciences did produce a genuine liberation of the spirit.

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The great idea of Evolution, with all its ramifications, did truly serve "*humanitas*" — it threw a great flood of light upon the nature of man, though, like all brilliant illumination, it cast many deep shadows as well. But to gain admission among the liberal arts, against the opposition of the entrenched classics, in the 1890's the proponents of the sciences discovered a new freedom of the mind — the "free election" of courses. Even this dubious freedom was at first undoubtedly liberating in its effects. But then men discovered — or remembered — that "free minds" are not given ready-made, waiting only to be freed from the fetters of a narrow and illiberal curriculum founded on the classics. Freedom, alas, is never so easily won. In education, as in politics and economics, we have found that it takes careful planning, guidance, and discipline. For freedom is never a gift, a datum, but always an achievement.

In other words, as their history makes clear, the "liberal arts" have never been "liberal" or emancipating because they comprised certain definite "subjects" — although certain subjects have traditionally been taught because they have been found to be *liberating*. Indeed, whenever they have been reduced to the compass of certain privileged and traditional subjects — the "classics," or "literature" in general, or the "humanities," taken as "what is not science" — the liberal arts have ceased to be liberal or liberating at all. Failure to realize that the "liberality" of any art consists, not in its content, but in its function, is the fallacy that vitiates most defenses of the so-called "liberal arts" today — a fallacy of which unfortunately all the books mentioned are guilty. For instance, merely because of tradition all these writers omit from their educational program those arts which are today probably the most genuinely liberating in their function, those that are at present adding most to our knowledge of man and human nature and its powers, the sciences of man himself — anthropology, psychology, and those parts of our social sciences that are emancipating and not merely a matter of technical training.

No, that art is "liberal," whatever it may be, which *liberates* man, which increases the freedom of the mind, which effectively

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promotes the *function* that the traditional "liberal arts" used to perform. The question of a "liberal education" thus becomes: Which studies and which disciplines best serve to liberate the mind, and thus to educate free minds? With the needs of our modern world, which will be founded on technology and engineering, on professional competence, whatever we might prefer; and with the wealth of arts and fields of knowledge at our disposal, arts undreamed of during earlier programs of liberation — what ought a "Liberal Arts Program" to teach, in order to accomplish the ends of liberal education, to make these competent professionals we shall have to train something more than mere professional technicians — to make them free men and free minds?

Now, of course, any art, any "subject," can be taught as a liberal art, if it is taught in such a way as to liberate the mind and enlarge its vision and powers. The natural sciences, the social sciences, the arts of literature and expression, can all be taught in a way that is genuinely emancipating; in our colleges as a whole there is not one that is not so taught here and there — even the two usually taught most illiberally, the classics and engineering. I am acquainted with a teacher of engineering who makes his subject a truly liberating art; though I should hardly advise any institution to devise a curriculum on the assumption that such liberal teachers of engineering are easy to find. Whether an art or a subject is "liberal" or not depends upon the way in which it is taught; and that, within the elastic limits of institutional pressures, depends in the last analysis on the teacher. Were all teachers in a college themselves free minds, there would be no problem of devising a satisfactory curriculum.

But equally, any art and any subject can be taught as an illiberal art, as a technical "specialty"; and in American colleges recently, with notable but far too infrequent exceptions, I am afraid most of them usually have been. Take the traditional humanistic program stemming from the Renaissance — the "classics." Two generations ago the classicists, having long subordinated "*humanitas*" to the teaching of the "dead" languages, began to feel the need for justifying their scientific rigor in competition with the pushing new sciences. Under the influence of their German

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training, they went in for scientific language study in a big way. They branched out into linguistics, epigraphy, papyrology, and other technical specialties and servile arts — all admirable enough as the servants of something else, but none calculated, except in very exceptional circumstances, to free the mind and educate free men. From this narrow specialization the classics are only today recovering. But they must still face and overcome an immense and justified prejudice: the sins of the fathers are being visited upon the third and fourth generations.

The classics — the great achievements of the Greeks and the Romans — when freed from pedantry and liberally taught, are still extraordinarily effective instruments for liberating the mind. Every college that has really tried the experiment, from the pioneer enterprise of Columbia under John Erskine back in the early 1920's down to its later imitators, like Chicago and St. John's, has discovered the immense stimulus to thought that comes from introducing students directly to the great books of the ancient, as well as of the medieval and modern, world. But the classics have had to be rescued from their ill-repute and made liberal and effective agents of education by others than the classicists. It is probably still true, as Whitehead has pointed out, that "of all types of man today existing, classical scholars are the most remote from the Greeks of the Periclean times" — from free and educated minds.

The sciences two generations ago, under the vision of great teachers who had seen how the nineteenth-century discoveries about nature and man could emancipate the mind from prejudice and provincialism, were probably for a time the most "liberal" and liberating arts taught in American colleges. I think of my father's education during the nineties, and of the vision which the natural sciences, greatly taught, were able to give him. Even today our science teachers are struggling nobly in a long battle with engineering and professional specialization; where their struggle is successful, the sciences are probably still both the most effectively taught and the most effectively educational of all the "subjects" of our standard curriculum.

But the sciences, too, since my father's day, in sheer self-de-

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fense have transformed themselves from liberating arts to professional "specialties." And this notion of professional training has been carried over into their college offering. Today courses in the sciences aim primarily to train physicists, chemists, professional scientists, and only incidentally to free the mind or educate men. Students who enter on their study must pretty much sell their souls to this professional objective. In our liberal arts colleges the scientists have become notoriously the most traditional and hidebound members of the faculty, the least able to understand and sympathize with a program of liberating education. Fortunately they remain the allies of those interested in education, against the cookbook science of the engineers.

The natural result of this professionalizing of the scientific studies is that students who today want a liberal education hate the sciences, as a generation ago such students hated the classics — and for much the same reason. And college graduates who have not "specialized" in a science know far less about the sciences, and are far more untouched by what the scientific spirit might accomplish in a truly liberal education, than were their fathers or grandfathers. This is immensely unfortunate, both for "liberal education," and, I fear, for the sciences themselves.

English and the other modern literatures, when liberally taught, are still the stronghold of the liberal arts; and we are privileged to count among our colleagues some great teachers. But the literatures are mostly not so taught. Two generations ago, for much the same reason that led to the downfall of the classics, and under a similar German model, there was initiated in our universities the "scientific study of literature." Even now such study largely dominates most of our graduate schools. The future teacher of English literature must learn Anglo-Saxon and even Gothic — fields immensely important for a knowledge of linguistics, but fields that have nothing whatever to do with literature as a liberating art. It is almost true to say that whatever our teachers of literature have learned about literature as a liberating art has been learned in spite of their graduate study.

The teachers of foreign literatures have been forced, by the disappearance in large parts of the country of almost all serious

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teaching in the foreign languages below the college level, to concentrate more and more on instruction in the languages themselves. Now, a knowledge of foreign languages is something that a free mind must possess; of that there can be no question. But the task of acquiring a foreign language has no justifiable place in education on a college level; such study cannot by the wildest stretch of the imagination be called a liberal art. In any intelligent scheme of education, such skills would have been gained before college age. In practice, they must often wait until that time. But there seems to be general agreement, at least by all except perhaps college teachers of languages, that of all possible ways of learning a new language, for those of the level of maturity of college students the average college course is about the worst.

Finally, there are the visual arts and music, enormously effective in increasing the powers and range of the mind — wonderfully liberating if liberally taught. But this instrument belongs almost wholly to the future. At present such arts are taught as what Bacon called "delicate learning" — their teachers aim not at power, but at ornament and decoration, and they make their subjects ostentatious and luxurious.

Since all the arts and sciences can be taught illiberally, and usually are, what is the way out? Well, we have found by experience that there are various ways of teaching them liberally — that is, in such fashion as to reveal their place in the universe of knowledge, and not leave them mere "specialties," isolated and unrelated, with no relevance to anything else. There are many ways in which a liberal teacher can make them part of the education of a whole man, who through them may come to understand himself and his powers, his world and his relation to it. There are many roads to freedom, to the achievement of perspective, toward making the arts instruments of liberation from the insistences of the moment so that the student can see where those insistences fit into the picture, and why they are so insistent. Unlike most of those arguing about liberal education today, I can see no single panacea, and cannot hitch my wagon to any one of the schemes so plentifully proposed. That is a large part of the trouble in this whole business — there are so many

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drugs on the market, excellent specifics in themselves, which are being dubiously promoted as nostrums and cure-alls.

The ideal, of course, would be to have a whole faculty of educated men, teaching every subject as a liberating discipline, not as a "specialty" or illiberal art. But a faculty of educated men is very hard to collect, and still harder to keep liberal and liberating: it is so easy to settle down. Perhaps the major virtue of a reform of the curriculum — any reform — is to stir up the teachers and shake them out of their ruts.

Some ways of teaching have, of course, been found by experience to be easier than others to make, and even to keep, liberal. Especially for upper-classmen, it helps to teach the arts "philosophically" — that is, in a spirit critically aware of their assumptions and methods, and of their place in the whole of knowledge and their function in our culture.

For under-classmen, perhaps the easiest way to teach subjects liberally is to teach them historically. There is no magic about the teaching of "history" itself. That can well be as illiberal an art as any other when it, too, becomes a matter of teaching more and more about less and less. And most of the historical research of our professional scholars and historians, while doubtless useful and valuable enough, is nevertheless servile rather than liberal. It is that kind of labor Santayana had in mind when he wrote: "Historical research is a servile science which may enter the Life of Reason to perform there some incidental service, but which ought to lapse as soon as that service is performed." But it is well to remember that Santayana said this in a book itself written both historically and liberally, one which has been as potent in emancipating the mind as any in our generation.

History when liberally conceived, Santayana also adds, has the function either of politics or of poetry. It is political, in bringing the past to a focus upon our problems, in illuminating the choices which it is ours to make, in making clear why we must face them, and in helping us to understand the materials with which we must work. History best performs its function as politics when it is functioning as poetry, as a revelation of man — of what human nature has been and has become, of what Santayana has most

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fittingly called the sweetness and glory of being a rational animal.

For man and his life is fundamentally historical in character: human nature is an historical nature, temporal and cumulative. Its history is of its very essence. We cannot understand man today — as free minds must — without understanding the fact that man has had a history, and that he is still making his own history. That is after all what is meant by calling freedom, a free mind, *humanitas*, a long achievement. Today we are still almost at the beginning of the painful but fascinating process; we are just emerging from barbarism. Emerging? As we look about us at the moment, who can deny that we are still barbarians, clever foxes with streaks and flashes of humanity in our make-up — just enough to give us a vision of what man might become were he to become wholly human, wholly man?

As William James pointed out, "You can give humanistic value to almost anything by teaching it historically. Geology, economics, mechanics are humanities when taught with reference to the successive achievements of the geniuses to which these sciences owe their being. Not taught thus literature remains grammar, art a catalogue, history a list of dates, and natural science a sheet of formulas and weights and measures." It is easy to teach any subject liberally if it be considered and taught historically, as a part of man's long achievement of humanity.

The crucial case, as any college teacher knows, is my friend the professor of engineering. He teaches engineering liberally because he sees it historically. He brings to his teaching something of the vision of that mighty chorus from the *Antigone* glorifying the works of Man, the maker and contriver of things. In our deep concern with liberal education, there is no need for us to renounce the production of engineers. To be a nation of competent technicians does seem to be our American destiny. But we can resolve not merely to train competent technicians; we can also educate them as free men and free minds. If our education succeeds in producing free minds, men of understanding and vision, then those men can go on in that liberal spirit to be men of power. And in that marriage of knowledge and power they can become whole men, men who have found something of *humanitas*.

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Democracy and the Negro

Otelia Cromwell

DEMOCRACY" is the watchword of the day. On every side we are made aware by newspapers, by magazines, by "bond drives," by speeches of public officials that the Allied nations are waging this second World War in the cause of democracy. But as that word falls daily upon our ears, certain "obstinate questionings" arise in some of our minds: What do we mean by that term? Is it truly a watchword — or is it a catchword? In the name of "democracy" we are aroused over atrocities inflicted upon the Jews in Europe; we truly feel that the issue at stake in this frightful struggle between the Nazis and the liberty-loving peoples of the world *is* a battle for "democracy" — a battle in which we offer all we have, including the lives of many. But if we venture to raise the question of "democracy" in connection with the American Negro, we find many otherwise thoughtful people shying nervously away from the issues involved, and we begin to wonder whether the lesson of democracy has really been driven home to Americans who pride themselves upon the word. Is it more than a meaningless jumble of letters? Sadly, one must notice the contrast between the lip-service in America to the democratic ideal, so far as Europe is concerned, and the actual *facts* of American life. There is a glaring inconsistency between American theory and practice, which furnishes case histories for students of government and exhaustless source material for satirists. Upon such inconsistency our enemies have been quick to seize. They have found powerful propaganda in our failure to practice what we preach. Small wonder if some of their followers are not convinced by our preaching.

At the very moment when America is proving one of the leaders of the world in the crusade for democracy in Europe and Asia, thirteen million American citizens are deprived of the democracy for which the sons of America — including many of that thirteen

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million — have gone forth to war. Ironically enough, as one writer has said: "We are fighting to maintain that democracy abroad that we have not practiced at home." In the stress of war America calls on her citizens for money, arms, munitions; for technical skills and inventive genius; for imagination and thought. Each of us must spend his talents, his means, his strength, for the preservation of the American way of life, the American ideal of democracy. With brevity and clarity, in slogan after slogan, the goal is kept constantly before us. We are all called to the colors, though one gives his life, another only his time or his money. Every American must respond to the call to defend democracy.

It is difficult, then, to understand the mood of some Americans, who are unwilling to consider the position of the Negro in this universal battle for the safeguarding of human rights. Thirteen million American citizens are advised to forget the very principle announced as the goal of war. They must show their loyal enthusiasm toward the attainment of a goal which is not for them. The Negro must be nobly altruistic and accept his lot for the good of the whole. He must not raise the question of his constitutional rights. True, in most parts of the country it is comfortably agreed that he has such rights, yet because of what is practical, what is prudent, he is asked to forget them and tranquilly accept his subjection as the better part.

I

It is unfortunate that America had not solved her own problems of democracy when she was called upon to aid in solving others of great import to civilization. It is particularly unfortunate that at this very moment in history the tension between races in America is taut. The country is stunned by reports of the lynching of fourteen-year-old boys, the continued mistreatment of Negro soldiers, and horrible race riots. Federal troops rushed to the scenes of crimes can at most quell the disorders only for the moment. In all seriousness and sincerity, an effort should be made to differentiate between the relative importance of the immediate occasions of violence and the causes that originally set that violence in motion. Time and again the suggestion has been made

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that the inadequate housing of Negroes is primarily responsible for race riots. But what is the cause of insanitary, overcrowded, dilapidated, exorbitantly-priced dwelling houses or apartments? Not the landlord, rapacious though he may appear; the landlord is only a realist, profiting by the inexorable law of supply and demand. The cause of inadequate housing is rather to be found in a particular social condition, in a policy firmly rooted in large cities to crowd Negroes, regardless of their ability to pay or their ideals of home life, into segregated sections. This forcing of the Negro into a restricted ghetto is the outward and visible sign of the spirit of prejudice, an attitude which, in turn, naturally provokes resentment — submerged or expressed — on the part of the Negroes. The clear course to pursue may be the difficult one of changing accepted ways of thinking in regard to the Negro; but even if traditional points of view that retard the development of democracy are not discarded, their potent significance should be realized. A race riot arouses a veritable storm of protest. Is there any corresponding protest over property covenants, the device that forces Negroes to herd into allocated areas?

The time is past for temporizing with America's greatest problem, temporizing or appeasement being just as helpful as the evasive diagnosis or the palliative drugs offered by a physician to a patient suffering from a serious disorder. The patient's condition demands frank advice, possibly the surgeon's knife. For a time a patient may be buoyed up by false hope, but sooner or later he must know the truth and brace himself for the ordeal. Thus it is with the Negro problem, except that the recoil in this case is not from blood, for while the magnitude and horror of present-day warfare have brought home to everyone the need of outlawing war once and for all, America is in this war to the bitter end, and is thus geared to the necessary shedding of blood. To solve the Negro problem America faces the necessity of uprooting the deeply entrenched practice of Negro segregation. Segregation is the root of the trouble.

The Negro and his friends oppose segregation because segregation connotes inequality. Although it is often claimed that in the separation of groups there is no necessary implication of inequal-

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ity, equality in segregation is at most an evanescent theory. Compulsory detachment or exclusion of any one group leads swiftly and inevitably to repudiation, and repudiation is the open door to discriminations of all kinds. In his opposition to segregation the Negro is no mere visionary; indeed, he is the practical-minded, the wary one, in that he does not permit his thinking to become beclouded by deceptive promises of "equality in segregation." Segregation is, and is meant to be, the hallmark of inferiority. People living in such areas know only too well that inequality — to say nothing of incipient persecution — is the be-all and end-all of segregation.

II

Consider, for a moment, the way in which "equality" works in a certain well-known city, whose "fair" dual system of education is frequently cited because of the single salary scale for white and Negro teachers. The boast of this city is that funds for the purchase of sites for schools and the construction and equipment of school buildings for whites and Negroes are appropriated in strict ratio to the numerical status of the two groups of the school population, the only differences being quantitative ones. The published school budget confirms this principle of quasi-fairness. Yet how account for the marked disparity in high school stadia — the sturdily built, brick and concrete structures attached to the high schools for the white children of the city, and the wire-enclosed spaces provided for the Negro children? Equally obvious evidences of inequality are the customarily inadequate playground spaces for the Negro schools and the location of these schools, as a rule, in or near vice-ridden areas or in sections planned for future Negro developments. Not quite so obvious, but of greater significance, is the basis of the charge made by Negro teachers that supplies and equipment in the Negro schools are curtailed even though classes are invariably over-crowded and teaching loads are well-nigh unbearably heavy. In less favored sections of the country the separate schools are marked by even more appalling differences: dilapidated, sparsely furnished shacks, shortened school terms, poorly paid teachers in the

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schools for Negro children in sharp contrast to well-constructed modern buildings, normal school terms, and adequately paid teachers in the white schools.

But even if an ideal of absolute equality could be achieved in the segregated school, such an institution, undemocratic in principle, would still be fraught with potentialities of trouble. The separate school, which often throws sand into the eyes of the Negroes themselves, introduces children, black and white, to the hitherto unsuspected fact of race prejudice and thus establishes a "mind-set." This aim accomplished, the ground for a train of ingeniously contrived acts and measures of insult is prepared. The separate school furnishes the pattern for a series of repressive customs and enactments increasing inevitably in an incredibly swift geometrical progression. It foreruns and gives impetus to such social blots as the biased tone of news articles, sinister bars in labor organizations, prohibitions against Negro participation in public utilities, the share-cropper system, the ghettos "on the other side of the railroad," and, in the last analysis, lynchings and race riots. When, because of the prejudice in the Nation's capital, it was found impossible to secure a suitable auditorium for Marian Anderson in Washington, the classic excuse offered to sponsors of the recital was, "You know the Washington school system furnishes the pattern for segregation in this city." We remember the old proverb even though we would proscribe the language through which the wisdom first came to us — "He who says 'A' must also say 'B.'"

It is hardly necessary to restate the position of the South on the Negro question or to repeat, in the language of some Southern liberals, the warning that on this question the South is unyielding. The purpose and nature of the entire Southern program, from tricky "grandfather clauses" to plain torture and murder, are as clear as the day. As W. J. Cash declares in *The Mind of the South*, the fixed purpose of keeping the Negro in a state of inferiority conditions practically all Southern policies as they relate to every phase of Southern life. Before such prejudice the interests of the country at large fade into thin air. What could be more indicative of this psychology than the action of a governor of a Southern

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state who refused a contract for the manufacture of textiles for the Federal government because the laws of the state enforcing segregation in labor would be violated by the federal government's non-segregation ordinances? Would not a similar refusal in other quarters be considered "subversive of the war effort?"

But this injustice toward the Negro, like other forms of injustice, reacts upon itself. Consider the significant assertion made with increasing frequency by writers from the South that this program is, in the main, responsible for the fact that the South lags behind other sections of the country in general advancement. The deplorable poverty and backward state of the Negro constitute, of course, important causes of this downward pull; yet if, as a result of law and custom, the Negro is forced into the lowest economic stratum, if he is denied adequate education, if he lacks opportunities for becoming a self-respecting citizen and is practically prohibited from developing into a social asset in his community, then, as night follows day, his degradation will become unescapable. He may not evade it. What is equally inevitable is that the general status of a community is lowered by the deterioration of any of its parts. That is the crux of the situation. In keeping the Negro down, the South is stunting its own wholesome growth, not only because there is no ivory tower of refuge for the favorite sons and daughters, but because no individual or groups of individuals, large or small, may escape the punitive consequences of self-imposed, persistent error. Moral weakness and disintegration, always stronger than external forces, are invincible enemies to man's well-being, and material prosperity is no compensation for the loss of the protective cloak of spiritual strength. Southern injustice toward the Negro is a commonplace of knowledge throughout the entire world. The South itself, through its apologists and its quasi-liberals, demonstrates its awareness of the weakness of its position. But is the entire country endeavoring to become an expanded South?

Warmly cherished sentiment and steel-bound traditions may not be changed in the twinkling of an eye, but at this hour of the day free peoples are endeavoring to achieve a policy of unequivocal justice for all the peoples of the world. Pearl Buck, in an article

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published in *Asia*, has warned us of the danger of misconceptions of fundamental issues in this war:

> Yet those who wage this war for freedom must have the widest possible understanding of what freedom means, or it will be lost however the armies win it. Sooner or later there will be war and war again as there has been in the past, unless this one principle of freedom for all is put into the bedrock of human life, as essential as bread and air and water. . . . Freedom for all — that is the meaning of this war or it has no meaning.

If, to some Americans, the attack on Pearl Harbor is less significant than the fall of Richmond, and the Stars and Bars commands greater respect than the Stars and Stripes, the patriotism that inspires this kind of thought and feeling should not be adopted today by Americans who understand what America is fighting for.

First and last, the horns of the dilemma are these: we perceive, on the one hand, a sincere desire to secure unequivocal democracy based on reason and fair play; on the other, we are faced with the retention of an undemocratic system based on sentiment and tradition. What the Negro desires seems to him the spirit actuating the effort of the Allied Nations. What he actually finds are certain conditions closely akin to the fundamental philosophy of the Nazi program.

The Negro seeks to achieve his Constitutional rights in both letter and in spirit. The Negro would realize concretely the ideal of American citizenship: the right to vote as a constituent of those making the laws by which he must abide; the right to work in utilities that he supports and helps to develop into profitable enterprises; the right to engage as a worker in private industries which, as an ultimate consumer, he aids in making profitable; the right to work in and for the federal government, his range of employment not being curtailed arbitrarily but extended from the services of the humblest laborer to membership in policy-making bodies, according to his talents, his training, his industry, and his general efficiency. Further, he would enjoy all the privileges in the way of protection, education, and other benefits that the federal government, the state, and the community provide for citizens. Inasmuch as rights and privileges imply obligations, the

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Negro would not shirk the duty of being a law-abiding citizen and a worthy member of his community; neither would he evade the duty and privilege of entering the Army, the Navy, and the Air Forces to defend his country in time of war. These prerogatives and obligations are the veritable meaning of citizenship in a democracy. In the United States of America the Constitution and its amendments grant to Americans specific rights and privileges. If ingenious legislators in certain sections of the country have violated the spirit of the Bill of Rights while conforming strictly to the letter of the document, this specious legislation does not invalidate one iota of the inherent rights of victims of class legislation.

III

Rebuilding is usually a discouraging process, as momentum lags in uncertainty, negation, and the recovery of forward action. The effort is a slow, uphill course, which demands sincerity, imagination, perseverance, and courage. Firmly imbedded attitudes may not be changed on the spur of the moment, but *thoughtful Americans throughout the country ought to acknowledge the mockery in what passes for democracy in their own country; thoughtful Americans ought to understand that no program based on the principle of segregation will ever solve America's race problem.* At least the thinking on the subject should not be muddled.

But the case is not hopeless. A definite step toward a better day in America would be taken if important groups or communities would make a forthright effort to oppose the introduction of segregation in areas hitherto free from segregation. It is easier to forestall new measures of repression or to discountenance the introduction of discriminatory practices than to reverse ordinances or to change established policies. With this thought in mind we should realize that the entire blame for the attitude of America toward the Negro must not be laid solely at the doors of the South. Even if the flood of Southern "defense literature" indicates a sharply-etched plan to imprint the pattern of segregation far above the Potomac, the accomplishment of this design cannot be effected without the compliance of other sections of the

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country. The adoption of reactionary policies in borderline states and areas far beyond Southern boundaries is the responsibility, not of the original authors of the plan, but of those accepting it. What is past is past. Yet, when today America is taking conspicuous lead among the Allied Nations, whose aim is to make democracy a living actuality for the world, America should not sponsor doctrines and practices that submerge and keep in subjection any groups of her people.

Again, much might be accomplished by an objective survey of the treatment accorded the Negro by the newspapers of the country. As there is due process of law for the apprehension and conviction of criminals, it would be well to determine just why American newspapers persist in signifying the race — often in headlines — of every Negro accused of infringement of law. No other group of Americans receives such publicity. Moreover, the disproportionate space given in the newspapers to news of Negro suspects and criminals not only indicts the entire Negro race every time a Negro is accused or convicted of crime, but serves to intensify race prejudice. And, in the words of Southern liberals, it is race prejudice: "the tradition of the South — defined in terms of prejudice and romantic unrealism — that is delaying Dixie's progress." If newspapers in this country are deliberately attempting to foster race prejudice — playing with dynamite, as it were — the country should remain under no delusion as to the purpose of this propaganda.

Because of the spirit of the American white press, the Negro newspaper has developed largely as an organ of protest. That the tone of many Negro newspapers is decidedly yellow no one would deny. As part and parcel of American journalism the Negro publications embody the characteristic traits of one kind of American newspapers, and the Negro publishers, who are also good business men, recognize the selling qualities of sensational features as well as the fact that there are readers, black as well as white, who do not enjoy yellow journalism. But the Negro would be in a plight, sorrier than the one in which he finds himself today, were it not for the Negro newspapers. Catering to an undifferentiated mass of readers the Negro editor cannot be entirely conserva-

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tive, even though he himself would not indulge wholly in sensationalism. To satisfy some of his readers he often offends the taste of others, but he is welcomed by the entire group of Negroes because he reports more fully, and usually with greater regard to the whole truth, news of special import to Negroes. Many readers of these journals would not condone unwholesome flavor or offenses to good taste, but they are grateful to a newspaper courageous enough to develop a policy characterized by forthright statement on the fundamental issues of the Negro problem and by unequivocal acceptance of the principles of democracy. Such a policy is conducive to unqualified good, not only for the Negro, but for the country as a whole.

The Negro constitutes the lowest economic group in America. Work, not "Relief," he needs and desires. Miss Virginia Snitow, writing in *The New Republic* of her experiences in teaching Negroes in a large New York high school, says: "There is as little foundation to the other charges of laziness and immorality as there is to that of mental inferiority. Three thousand 'lazy' Negro women waited in line from early dawn to get two jobs scrubbing floors in a New York City armory." But the Negro does not complain of wholesome competition in labor, or of unemployment caused by the law of supply and demand. What bothers him is the discrimination which increases as he passes from unskilled to skilled labor, from the simpler tasks of directed industry to the higher phases of specialized work and technical research. It might be pleasant if all Negroes could be restricted to menial labor or to segregated groups of semi-skilled workers supervised here and there by Negro executives, but a democracy cannot settle the economic problems of thirteen millions of its people in that way.

In the search for a solution one admits that much more is needed than fiat by the federal government. However, achievement of utter democracy will be nearer at hand if discriminating practices are completely abolished in the offices of the federal government in Washington. Residents of the nation's capital hear too frequently first-hand complaints of young men and women who, having been certified by the Civil Service Commission, report that they are given the "run-around" when they present

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themselves to the specific bureau for which they have received qualifying status. It is reported that even in cases of apparent urgency (if being summoned for appointment by telegram is an index of urgency) Negroes appearing in person in response to summons are often rejected because "some mistake has been made." During the present crisis many of the color bars in the federal offices in Washington have been removed, and the certifications by the Civil Service Commission have been duly honored. Unfortunately, uniformity of action has not yet been attained, but every step toward fairness in employment by the government has a most salutary effect. The thousands of Negroes now working in the government in Washington make but an imperceptible dent in the wall of opposition which constitutes the Negro's labor problem; an example, however, afforded by the supreme seat of authority is always effective. Moreover, if the practice of limiting Negroes to the lowest rungs of the ladder of employment is abandoned, skilled and technically trained Negroes will have opportunity to show their mettle, and the consequent stepping-up will open opportunities for those in lower ranks of labor. Sound ethics in employment not only eases tension, but is found to offer a partial solution to the problem of Negro delinquency. Social agencies have long recognized in unemployment, with its train of discomforts and dissatisfactions, the major factor in Negro crime in crowded cities.

Before America can be truly democratic, it will be necessary to enact new laws and repeal some of the old ones. Although law has been described as the crystallization of sentiment and thought, sentiment — thought — law move in a cycle in which the *loci* of cause and effect are not always readily determined. The mixed student body of Berea College lived and worked together in harmonious relationship until a law of Kentucky, enforcing segregation in education, reversed the policy of a democratic institution, which had not desired the change. In that case law established an uncalled-for, retrogressive policy. One is not so naïve as to imagine that a federal measure prohibiting discrimination on account of race in institutions and branches of the government supported, wholly or in part, by federal funds would be a cure-all

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for race prejudice; however, nothing less than a strong, unequivocal law can hold in check those who set up and perpetuate undemocratic policies in the near and far-flung projects of the government. Such a proposed measure might, and probably would, experience the perennial fate of the anti-lynching bills, but just as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has shown no signs of abandoning its leadership in the campaign against lynching, in similar spirit faith in the rightness of its cause could support a measure designed to eliminate unfair practices toward the Negro in institutions aided or supported by the federal government.

The Negro may take some encouragement from the record of the struggle for justice in which women have been engaged for a long time. Although women still suffer many wrongs because of a strongly rooted sentiment in regard to sex, it is a far cry from the nineteenth-century attitude toward women to the status of women today. We recall accounts of the frigid reception given to women delegates at the World Anti-Slavery Convention held in London in 1840 — the credentials of the women delegates were not recognized, the women were relegated to gallery seats, and, of course, they had no vote in the proceedings. Then it was that thoughtful women, realizing the seriousness of the issue, decided that the time had arrived for concerted action on their part. In 1848, therefore, four American women — Lucretia Mott, Martha C. Wright, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Mary Ann McClintock — issued a call to the women of America to discuss their condition. Following the resultant meeting, the campaign began, but it took seventy years of struggle — disheartening struggle — before success, in the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, crowned the efforts of the pioneers at Seneca Falls. But progress by inches in the right direction is surely preferable to standstill or retrogression.

IV

Even though America retains or furthers her program of segregation, and even though the forces of oppression increase, the Negro must and will continue to keep the vision before him.

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In the meanwhile the education of Negroes goes steadily forward. Slow though the upward trend may be, it is sure, and has been marked by no steps backward. An educated group is a thinking group. Acts of repression may increase in number, but neither violence nor sugar plums can muzzle the power of thought — thought that will keep acute the Negro's awareness of the rights that should be his. The ultimate solution is in the future; and, trite though the observation is, "Nothing is settled until it is settled right."

Some of the friends of the Negro fear tragedy. But what is tragedy? Certainly not the death or deaths that, as a rule, mark the end of a tragic spectacle. Is not tragedy the action, the struggle of a strong man overcome, not by the renunciation of his cause, but by a stupendous, adverse force — a force often within himself? This definition, in part, of tragedy, formulated centuries ago, has been widely accepted in life as in art. For groups of people as well as for individuals it still holds true. Measured by this universal principle, the American Negro may be considered as a tragic figure; but he is nobly tragic only as long as he cherishes an enduring faith in the rightness of his cause, a faith he loses the moment he renounces the struggle for his rights. At that moment he will be overcome, not by tragedy, but by moral disaster and decay.

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Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet

B. H. Haggin

YOU reach home, let us say, with expectations of a quiet dinner, of slippers, easy chair, a much read copy of *Hamlet* to take your mind far from the wearying details, arguments, and vexations of the long day at the office. And you learn with dismay that this is the night of the third concert of the city's major series, that your wife is going, and you are going with her.

"Schnabel is playing!" — and it is evident that your eyes should light up in anticipation; but instead you groan in recollection. Later, after a hurried change of clothes, a rushed dinner, seated uncomfortably beside your wife in the concert hall while a gray-haired man plays something called Sonata in B flat major by Schubert, you think, as you fold and unfold your program: "It seems to mean a lot to Schnabel; and I suppose it means something to all these other people; but it doesn't make sense to me." But by the time Schnabel is playing Beethoven's Sonata Opus 111 your boredom has given way to irritation; and savagely throwing away the shreds of your program you think: "I'll bet it doesn't mean any more to the others or to the old boy on the stage than it means to me. It *doesn't* make sense; and they're only pretending it does."

Some of them may be pretending; but the music Schnabel is playing does make sense — to him, and to others; it makes as much sense, and the same kind of sense, as *Hamlet* makes to you. You don't see that; but you will, I think, if you consider what *Hamlet* is and what it does.

To begin with, *Hamlet* is an example of the employment, on a very large scale, of an artistic medium. The nature of this employment we may see more easily in a small-scale example — in one of the *Sonnets:*

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Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchymy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine,
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow:
But, out! alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

Other men have had thoughts and emotions about the love they have possessed and lost; what they have not done is to elaborate these thoughts and emotions into the complex form of words, rich in rhythmed sound, in images, in overtones of sense and feeling, in which Shakespeare makes *his* thoughts and emotions on the subject articulate. The articulateness in words in metrical patterns is common enough: it produces huge quantities of worthless poetry by children, adolescents, adults. In Shakespeare's sonnet, however, the quality of the mere articulateness in the medium is itself uncommon; and its complexities and splendors represent in addition the workings of an uncommonly complex and rich mind and personality. Involved, that is, with the articulateness, operating through it, crystallized in the completed poem, are Shakespeare's personal resources — what he is in character, mind, feeling, what he has lived through, what his experience has done to him, what insights it has given him. This is true even of the sonnet; and it is true more obviously, more richly, more excitingly, of *Hamlet*.

If you are moved, excited, exalted by *Hamlet*, if for a time afterwards the real world appears to you wonderfully changed, that is because for several hours you have been looking through Shakespeare's eyes at an imagined world created between the covers of a book or on the stage of a theater — a world in which the natures of the human beings who inhabit it, the situations in which they are placed, the things they do and say, all express significances

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which life has come to have for this man with perceptions and insights that you and I do not possess. If *Hamlet* leaves you with an impression of greatness, that impression is one of the greatness of mind and spirit which Shakespeare reveals in his play. And if the insights of that mind and spirit impress you as much as they do, that is because of the richness of the poetic form in which they are embodied and presented to you.

Which brings us to this important fact: that if you are affected by *Hamlet* it is, first of all, because you have the personal resources which enable you to appreciate the insights it conveys; but it is also — and this is the important thing for our discussion — because you have the susceptibility to the poetic medium which enables you to be affected by the poetic form in which these insights are conveyed. I say this is the important thing for our discussion because similar insights are conveyed in Schubert's B flat Sonata and Beethoven's Opus 111, but through a different artistic medium; and if they do not get through to your mind it is because the *medium* is one to which, at the moment, you are not susceptible.

"Perhaps even Shakespeare never reached that final state of illumination that is expressed in some of Beethoven's late music," says Sullivan in his excellent book about Beethoven. If the state of illumination that is conveyed to you by Shakespeare is not conveyed by Beethoven in his second movement of the Sonata Opus 111, the reason is that you are susceptible to Shakespeare's medium of artistic communication but not to Beethoven's; and you will understand how this might be so, if you consider how long and how much you have read Shakespeare, who uses the words that are your own medium of communication and expression, and how few encounters you have had with Beethoven, whose musical idiom is not that of the folk songs or school songs or Broadway songs which you may be familiar with.

Understanding this, you may be disposed to try an experiment — which is to listen to the opening passage of that movement of Opus 111 at least once every evening for a couple of weeks, in order to become thoroughly familiar with it, and to see whether, as you come to know it, you begin to get from it some communica-

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tion of what a man like Beethoven might feel at the end of his life — the sense of experience mastered, of profound lessons learned, of resignation, inner illumination achieved. You can hear the passage on side 3 of the Columbia recording of Egon Petri's performance (play it to the point about one and a half inches from the first groove; and for the present resist the temptation to go further than that point).

You will be serving the purpose of the experiment and increasing its chance of success if you listen in the same way to another passage — the opening statement up to the faint rumble in the bass, in the first movement of Schubert's Sonata in B flat, which in a different way also communicates the sense of profound lessons learned, inner illumination achieved. By this time Victor may have issued the English recording of Schnabel's performance.

And listen also to two other passages for what they may communicate to you. One is the beginning of the third movement of Beethoven's Trio Opus 97 — the two statements of the piano that are echoed by the violin and cello, which you can hear on side 6 of Victor's recording of the Rubinstein-Heifetz-Feuermann performance or on side 5 of the old Victor recording of the Cortot-Thibaud-Casals performance. The other is the statement of the piano with which the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 begins; and hear it as it is played by Schnabel on the Victor record, not as it is played by Gieseking on the Columbia record.

I have suggested a couple of weeks; but obviously the experiment doesn't have to stop after two weeks. Give yourself all the time you may need to find those passages of music acquiring significance for you, or on the other hand to satisfy yourself that music is not for you the medium of artistic communication which you are willing to believe it is for others.

II

If now those passages convey significance to you, we can go on — first of all to get a more precise idea of this significance and how it is conveyed.

In the sonnet I quoted, or in one of Hamlet's soliloquies, we see

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a complex form of words embody and communicate a complex synthesis of thought and emotion. And if anyone were to ask "What thought, what emotion?" the answer would be "The thought and emotion expressed and defined by that form of words." One can say that the sonnet is concerned with the love which is given and then withheld; one can say further that this love is compared with the sun which lights the earth and then is hidden by clouds; but to do this is not to convey the rich overtones of sense and feeling that are expressed by

> Full many a glorious morning have I seen
> Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
> Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
> Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchymy;

and the rest of the poem. The only way of conveying those overtones is to state the precise form of words that Shakespeare himself devised for this purpose.

A painter, too, may be aware only of choosing a bit of paint and placing it on the canvas in relation to a number of other bits; but the choice, the placing, the relation, involve exercise of judgment — which is to say that they involve the whole man, the sum at that moment of his experience, thought, emotion, insight. What is involved in the choices and uses of the bits of paint reveals itself through them; and in the end the completed integrated arrangement of lines, colors, planes, masses, and forms is a visual embodiment and communication of a particular synthesis of that experience, thought, emotion, insight.

Roger Fry has described the process of a Cézanne still-life, in which bottles, pears, and apples, so commonplace as to have no emotional associations in themselves, are "deprived of all those specific characters by which we ordinarily apprehend their concrete existence," and are "reduced to pure elements of space and volume" which are then "coordinated and organized by the artist's sensual intelligence." He refers to Cézanne's own conception that it was out of these relations of formal elements that emotion was to emanate; and he says: "One may wonder whether painting has ever aroused graver, more powerful, more massive emotions than those to which we are compelled by some of Cé-

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zanne's masterpieces in this genre." And these emotions to which we are compelled — not by the subjects of the paintings, but by the pictorial treatment of the subjects — these grave, powerful, massive emotions are something we have no way of knowing or defining or conveying, other than by those relations of formal elements on the canvas that were Cézanne's way.

So with the piece of music that is a formal organization of sound — or sounds — in time. The sounds have no external references to objects or ideas; what they have is the internal coherence of a kind of grammar of their own; and the relations in which they are placed — in a texture of horizontal lines of sounds in sequence (melody) and vertical sounds in simultaneous combination (harmony), articulated by duration and stress (rhythm), and colored by the timbres of instruments or voices — are governed basically by this grammar, which is used in an individual style by each composer, in obedience to the laws of his own being. He too, that is, may be aware only of choosing a sound and placing it in relation to a number of others; but the choice, the placing, the relation, involving exercise of judgment as they do, involve the sum at that moment of his experience, thought, emotion, insight — of which a particular synthesis is finally embodied and communicated in the completed formal arrangement of sounds. If anyone were to ask about the second movement of Beethoven's Sonata Opus 111 "What thought, what emotion, what insight?" one could say, as I did earlier, "The sense of experience mastered, lessons learned, resignation, inner illumination achieved." But one would have to use the same words about the opening of Schubert's B flat Sonata, to describe experience mastered, lessons learned, resignation and illumination achieved that are different from Beethoven's and expressed in different musical terms. This demonstrates the inadequacy of the words, and the fact that here again we have no way of knowing or defining or conveying the synthesis of experience and emotion that is embodied in each piece of music, other than by the formal construction in sound that each man used for the purpose.

One might, for that matter, find no other words than "experience mastered, lessons learned, resignation and illumination

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achieved" for other pieces of music by Beethoven himself — that is, for the same synthesis of experience and emotion that embodies itself in different constructions of sound. From this we realize that in dealing with a work of art we are concerned not with meaning but with meaning as embodied in form. We read Shakespeare not merely for his profound insights, but for these insights as made explicit and affecting in his rich poetic forms; and so with Cézanne's powerful emotions, and the inner illumination and exaltation of Beethoven in his last years. We are, then, interested in each different formal construction on canvas from which we get the impact of the same powerful emotions, each different construction of sound which conveys to us the same inner illumination and exaltation.

III

I have gone into all this to get you to see that just as the way to understand Shakespeare's poem is to read it, and the way to understand Cézanne's still-life is to look at it, so the way — the only way — to understand Beethoven's or Schubert's sonata movement is the one you have already used successfully with its opening passage — to listen to it. It was natural for you, when the music made no sense, to ask to be told what its sense was, and to ask to be told in words, since you were accustomed to think of sense as expressible in words. And it was necessary for you to learn to apprehend from a phrase of music a sense which was not definable by words — which was defined solely by the particular organization of sounds in that phrase of music. You may say that I did use words to describe it and help you apprehend it; but they did not really describe what in the end you had to apprehend from the music and would have apprehended even without my words; and you will discover, when you are accustomed to the medium, that the meaning of a phrase of Beethoven or Schubert is grasped immediately with the sounds, and that if there is any difficulty, what is needed is not explanation of the phrase in words but repeated hearing of it. And you cannot get a wrong idea by listening to Beethoven or Schubert himself, but you will get some very wrong ideas by listening to the people who undertake to speak for him.

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It was natural for you also, when the music made no sense, to think that you might understand it if you were told things about it — about the man who wrote it, the period in which he lived, the ideas, tendencies, forces, which influenced him. But when you have experienced the joyousness, buoyancy, and exuberant playfulness embodied in Beethoven's Eighth Symphony you may be surprised to discover the vexations and turmoil that filled his daily life at the time he was writing this work; and you will learn from this that the biographical and historical background of a work of art may be quite irrelevant to it. For it is the inner core of personal qualities, emotions, and insights created by a lifetime of experience that governs the artist's selection and arrangement of words or paints or sounds in a poem or picture or symphony; and although this inner core is constantly altered and developed by his continuing experience, it is not affected by any and every happening of the day. When this inner development in Beethoven had reached the emotions and attitudes we are made aware of by the Eighth Symphony, they pressed for expression in the sounds of this symphony, unaffected by the external turmoil that was irrelevant to them. Earlier, too, it was the heroic emotions and attitudes that Beethoven had developed in the face of disaster which operated through his articulateness in his medium to produce the *Eroica* Symphony; if there had been no French Revolution there would have been no dedication to Napoleon to tear up when he made himself emperor, but there would have been the same *Eroica* Symphony. And Ernest Newman once pointed to the striking differences in the three great symphonies that Mozart wrote in those two months of wretchedness and despair in the summer of 1788, as evidence of the fact that "the creative imagination of a great artist functions too deep down within him to be greatly affected by anything that may happen on the surface of his life or his being." It is not, then, the biographical or historical background that gives us a clue to the meaning of the music; it is instead the music that often gives us our only clue to what was going on inside the composer.

But to know even relevant biographical and historical details *about* a work of art would not make the relations of elements *in* the work of art clearer and more significant. It is true, as we have

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seen, that the whole man was involved in the process which produced the Cézanne still-life; and it is further true that with the man there must have been involved, more remotely, the influences which had operated on him — the general ideas, the social and political conditions of the time. But when you knew these things that were involved in the process you would still have to perceive and feel the impact of the formal relations of space and volume that are the result of the process; and for this the things you knew about Cézanne's life would be neither necessary nor helpful. And so with Beethoven's or Schubert's sonata.

Nor do you need the technical knowledge of the professional musician. A piece of music is, to begin with, an organization of sounds; experiencing it begins with hearing the sounds and the way they are related in each phrase, the relation of one phrase to the next in the progression; and learning to hear these relations is at the same time a process by which you learn to follow the grammar and logic of musical thought, the operations by which it proceeds; but you can do all this without knowing the technical facts and names of what you are hearing. For one of those opening passages to acquire significance for you it was necessary to hear the sounds and their relations, for which you did not have to know that the tonic of C major was followed by a second inversion of the dominant seventh — any more than you have to know that a particular brown which you see in a painting is called burnt umber, and another which is placed in relation to it is called yellow ochre. What is true is that when you have heard something you will find the name of it convenient to use in referring to it; and someone else will find the name convenient to use to refer to it when talking to you about it. But a great many matters which the professional musician is concerned with, and the terms which he uses in discussing them — these you don't have to know anything about.

And now go on to hear what comes after those opening passages.

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Federation or Cooperation: The Scandinavian Experience

C. J. Hambro

IN PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS concerning a future world order, the importance of Federation or of Union (with a very capital U) has been constantly stressed, particularly in the United States. But the important thing is not the name given to the kind of world order we want to see established; it is the fullness of peaceful life and the extent of international security that will be possible and probable within the framework of that order.

The war itself, the gigantic dimensions of the war, have a tendency to make people forget that the struggle in which we are engaged is not fundamentally political but moral and spiritual, a tremendous fight between opposite conceptions of everything that is of vital importance to individual human life, freedom of religion, instinct for justice. And as a natural by-product of the colossal war efforts of great nations, we are witnessing the birth of a new type of imperialism. The war can be won only by mass production and by great numbers. Thus there will be a tendency to neglect the small nations, to forget what their sufferings, their moral and physical courage, have meant for the outcome of this war. Those small nations were fighting with England and defending every democratic idea while Russia had a pact with Germany and while America was busy keeping out of any entangling alliances. Advocates of that mythical idol called the "balance of power" are not interested in democratic ideas. And under the suggestion of mass transports of troops and mass production of munitions, good and well meaning people are beginning to think even politically in terms of masses; it appeals to their imagination to believe that the world can be reorganized on what might be called mass principles — continents, or something called continents; regional or racial federations. But nations cannot be added and

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subtracted, and the decisive factors in human history are the immaterial factors, ideas and ideals, dreams and desires, certain inherent urges that will break through any formal barrier. All attempts to force individuals or nations to live in any kind of union that was not a natural result of an organic political process have proved unsuccessful and obstacles to intelligent collaboration across frontiers of geography or of language.

The union forced by the Holy Alliance upon the different provinces of the Netherlands is illuminating in this respect. It led to sanguinary civil war and final separation. Since that divorce, in 1831, Belgium and Holland have been the best of friends, gravitating more and more toward each other.

But the fullest experience of unions, as well as of collaboration coming as a mature result of a universal public demand, is to be found in the Northern Countries. And the new type of international collaboration as developed among them is not only of a particular interest, but gives indications of the highest value for the future, the more so because the countries in question have not always been on a very friendly footing. Until 1814 they had been at war, off and on, for nearly one thousand years; in between they had known different types of union. Norway had been in a union with Denmark under a Norwegian King and under a Danish King. Norway had had a union with Sweden, and all three countries had been united (from 1387 to 1523). But union meant distrust and friction, alleged attempts of infringement on sovereign interests, and constant jealousy.

The last war among the Northern Countries came to an end in 1814; the modern collaboration started a good half century later from a very modest and practical beginning. From 1872 on, the bar associations of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden made it part of their program to have joint Scandinavian conventions. The lawyers of the three countries, for practical reasons, recommended a unification of commercial legislation. This movement was supported by the governments and by public opinion. Committees were appointed by the three bar associations to prepare a unified legislation, and step by step the three parliaments adopted identical check-laws, banking laws, marriage and divorce laws,

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maritime laws. Bankruptcy laws were made identical; if a man was declared bankrupt in one country, his property and holdings in the other countries were included in the bankruptcy proceedings in his home country. Laws of adoption, the rights and duties of parents, were made identical — Iceland joined in these efforts and so did Finland when she had won her independence.

These things came about, not as a result of governmental initiative, but because there was a public demand for them. New fields of legislation were constantly brought within the framework of this close cooperation. The severing of the union between Norway and Sweden in 1905 did not to any appreciable extent interfere with this work of legislative unification which had, essentially, a non-political character. And when some years had elapsed after 1905, it was found that with the political union a good many irritants had passed away and that national jealousy would no longer object to a rapid extension of the work of collaboration. The first World War gave an unexpected impetus to these efforts. Exposed to the same dangers, and laboring under the same hardships, the three small neutral countries were naturally drawn together, and their collaboration suddenly became a very important political element in their national life.

Following most venerable Scandinavian precedents, the King of Sweden, in December 1914, invited the King of Denmark and the King of Norway to meet him, with their foreign ministers, to discuss matters of joint interest. At the meeting there was unanimity, and it was decided to continue this particular kind of collaboration. There was a meeting of the three foreign ministers in Copenhagen in March 1916, and a most important meeting was held in Oslo in September 1916, during which a joint policy was agreed upon in questions of blockade, trade, shipping, and financial interests after the war.

Once again the collaboration among these nations was a spontaneous result of non-political sentiment, and legislation had only to codify what had already been demanded by public opinion. Every year professional men and women in the three — eventually five, with the full participation of Finland and Iceland — countries met to discuss and decide on matters of interest:

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doctors, lawyers, architects, engineers, administrative officers, industrialists, trade-unionists, bishops, teachers, housewives, farmers. In every walk of life people were marching in step. When there was a national convention of the Labor Party in Norway, the labor parties in the other Northern Countries were invited to send their delegates. And, what may seem a good deal more surprising, when the Conservative Party of Sweden had a national convention, delegates from the Conservative parties in the sister countries were invited to attend. The Conservative groups being traditionally the advocates of a nationalistic policy, this friendly collaboration between the political parties in the Northern Countries demonstrates better than anything else how deeply rooted had become this feeling of fraternity.

As one result of the long periods of war among the countries, Scandinavian history used to be taught in a somewhat different way in the schools of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. King Charles XII was a national hero in Sweden and a criminal lunatic in Denmark and Norway. The compatriots of the textbook writer were always heroic and nearly always in the right.

Such is the case in practically every country. Some years before the war, the private organization "Norden" (The North), with its branches in all these countries, appointed a committee of scholars to examine the textbooks of history and geography and see what could be done to this kind of scholastic chauvinism. At the recommendation of this committee it was decided to take out of the textbooks in one country any line that might hurt the feelings in the neighboring countries, and to present historical facts in an identical way in the schools of those countries. The authorities have acted on this recommendation with excellent results. It is a blessing for children to be brought up without the seeds of national resentments being planted in their minds, without being hampered by any dull feeling of old injustice or any secret desire for revenge stored in their subconscious thoughts.

There are joint Scandinavian professional reviews and magazines — any number of them. One year the editorial offices are in Denmark, the next year in Norway, and so on in rotation. A law student in any Scandinavian country will use important text-

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books from the other Scandinavian countries and will quote cases from a neighbor state. In the medical schools, before World War II, certain handbooks and manuals were used in all the countries, various chapters contributed by their most distinguished specialists. There was also an exchange of students and of teachers among all the Scandinavian countries; and just prior to the war this movement was extended to include an exchange, for instance, of bank employees. A movement has been inaugurated to exchange workers and farmers who go from one Scandinavian country to another and live among the people of their own condition and walk of life to learn the ways of the other country.

Most significant in this connection was the start of the very important quarterly *Le Nord* (international review of the Northern Countries). This model publication was unofficially official. There was an editor in every one of the five countries and a sponsoring committee consisting of the prime minister, the foreign minister, and prominent leaders of the parties not in the government; each government made a contribution to the quarterly, which was published in English, French, and German. But every article was signed, and *Le Nord* did not speak directly for the governments. It can truly be said that it would be impossible to find anywhere a periodical of higher standing. Its program was to inform the world about the Northern Countries and their contributions to international life and civilization. There was not the slightest friction, not even dissension, among the editors or among the sponsoring committees.

In every way the Northern Countries were drawn together during the years preceding the war. There had even been semi-official discussions among officers concerning the possibility of some kind of collaboration among the armies and the navies of the Northern Countries. For various reasons popular feeling would not have been in support of any military alliance. But in each country was appointed a "Committee of Economic War Preparedness." After Munich the governments of all the countries were anticipating a European conflict. Recalling World War I, and the hardships caused by the war and the blockade, the governments decided to consult each other in order to take every step

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to counteract the material, agricultural, and industrial difficulties so well remembered. The committees mentioned made a thorough survey of such natural resources as foodstuffs and minerals in each country, and then compared notes. It was agreed to proceed according to a common plan in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to know exactly how the best results could be obtained. For instance, Norway, with its great export of fertilizers, agreed to supply the other countries with the nitrates they needed so there would be no reason to fear any shortage in this field. Norway, with its great surplus of fat stuffs (whale oil, cod liver oil, herring oil), could take care of the fat deficit in Sweden and Finland; on the other hand, Norway badly needed other products that could be obtained from Denmark, Finland, and Sweden. Initial steps had been taken to put the plans into effect.

At the League of Nations the Northern Countries were closely in touch. They soon came to be looked upon as a separate group and in rotation were represented at the Council, where the country which at the moment filled the council seat, was regarded, and regarded itself, as also representing the other Northern states.

At the League this group very soon came into close contact with Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg. There was in many ways among these countries a community of interests, a community of sympathies and also of ideas; they had the same distrust of great power policy, and were equally interested in democratic evolution, in economic and commercial liberty, in equal justice for great and small, and in every effort to secure a stable peace. As a natural result of this development, the Oslo Convention was brought about.

In 1929 the Assembly of the League of Nations decided to convoke an international conference for the purpose of concluding a customs truce. The conference met in February 1930, and in March a very limited agreement was signed by a number of countries — one group composed of nations that had their customs tariffs bound by commercial treaties and undertook not to denounce such treaties for one year and within the same period not to raise their tariffs without previous notice to their co-signatories; the other group, states not bound in a similar way, undertook not to increase their protective duties for one year.

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The convention was first ratified by Norway, next by Belgium. But when the conference met again in November 1930, so few states had ratified that the convention could not be put into force.

At the initiative of the Norwegian Government, and after preliminary discussions, representatives of the governments of Belgium, Denmark, Holland, Luxembourg, and Sweden met in Oslo in December 1930 and signed the so-called Oslo Convention, by which the governments of those countries undertook not to increase their customs duties or to establish new duties without giving notice to the other parties at least fifteen days beforehand. If any of the other parties held that the duties planned might be injurious to their interests, they would have a period of ten days in which to communicate objections and propose amendments; in this case the duties in question were not to become effective before one month had elapsed after the communication, thus leaving time for negotiation. Finland became a member of the Oslo group as from November 1933.

No doubt the collaboration within the Oslo group did much to draw the component states more closely together; and at the Assembly of the League there were joint meetings of the delegations of all the countries in question. Sometimes even Switzerland, which was strongly drawn toward this group, participated in the joint deliberations.

The Oslo Convention and the following Hague agreement of 1937 were intended to be the first steps on the road toward lowering trade barriers among nations and toward bringing them closer together in an atmosphere of economic and commerical security and peace. The efforts met with only moderate success because the Great Powers of Europe, when invited to follow the principles enunciated in the Hague agreement, were willing enough to accept the advantages offered but entirely unwilling to undertake the reciprocal engagements.

Nevertheless, the countries within the Oslo group more and more felt the need for extended political cooperation. After Munich it was clear that the life of every small nation was at stake. Conversations among the foreign ministers became more

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intimate, and, on the eve of the present war, there was a joint meeting of the foreign ministers of the Northern and the Low Countries to discuss the vital interests of the small neutral countries. At this meeting Switzerland participated as an "observer." The German invasion of Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg for the time being brought to an end this period of growing collaboration. But there is very little reason to doubt that it should be renewed and extended when the war is over.

The Oslo group experiment demonstrated that the Northern Countries felt that it was not enough to stick together as a geographic bloc. They realized that between states, as between individuals, there are interests other than those of neighborhood which bind together. The states of the Oslo group have fought against economic barriers, against arbitrary international restrictions; they have always been the most consistent protagonists of compulsory arbitration; they have worked assiduously for free trade. And the entire history of the collaboration among the countries of this group demonstrates very clearly that enlightened goodwill, a well educated liberal training, the consensus of a critical public opinion, means far more for intelligent international cooperation than formal ties and contractual obligations.

The path of the future is indicated in the words of King Gustaf of Sweden, spoken at Oslo in November 1917 at the Royal Palace, which had once been his residence: "Let us form a new union, not of the old order, but a union of hearts and mutual understanding, whose vitality shall be of a more lasting nature than the old one."

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American Readers and Books

Dorothy Canfield Fisher

MY SEVENTEEN YEARS' experience as a member of the Committee on Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club causes many to believe that I can speak with authority on "the changing tastes of readers," and can offer final answers — complete with statistics — to such questions as: "What kind of reading do Americans like?" and "Why do they like it?" Let me say at once, categorically, that I don't know enough about changes in the tastes of American readers, or the reasons for those changes, to say anything definitive on the subject. What's more, I don't believe anyone else does. For my failure to answer those queries in any final form, I reply with Dr. Johnson, when he was questioned about his definition of a horse's hocks: "Ignorance, Madam, pure ignorance." Even after a great deal of first-hand contact with a large number of American readers, it's difficult enough for me to make any kind of guess about what their tastes really are.

Seventeen years ago, just before I went to the first meeting of the Committee on Selection, my ignorance was even greater. What *were* the tastes of American readers? Who knew? Certainly not I, and certainly not the other members of the Committee. Above all, what was the explanation of certain disturbing facts well known to research specialists of the American Library Association and to American publishers? One fact was that the people of the United States, almost all literate, bought, relatively speaking, few books. Germany bought four times as many as our own country. In Holland, Switzerland, and the Scandinavian countries the proportion was much higher. The relatively few Americans who knew or cared about the dismaying showing made by our rich, literate country in the matter of buying books tried at first to minimize this by saying hastily, "Americans *read* as much as other people, but they get their reading in magazines and news-

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papers. Considering the magazines and newspapers just as an 'industry,' they have been very capably run in this country." There is undoubtedly a good deal in this explanation, but it must be considered together with the fact that the Germans and Scandinavians also are (were!) great magazine readers, but *did* buy books.

After this explanation, probably the most adequate one offered for the relatively small number of books bought in our rich country, another one was always advanced, "Americans have free public libraries everywhere." The American Library Association's exact records tell a different story. A map of the United States showing how many Americans do not yet have any library service always strikes a solar-plexus blow to our ideas about our country's library standing. Furthermore, the A.L.A. figures about the rate of circulation of books in places where there are libraries cuts some more ground from under our feet. Here are a few characteristic statistics, taken at random from recent records: in New York City only 22 per cent of the population are registered as borrowers of books from public libraries; 3.19 books per person per year are circulated among them. Montclair, New Jersey, makes a high showing with 10 books per year per person. A New England town like Keene, New Hampshire, is nearer the average, with 6.67 volumes per person per year. So far as I know, no one has yet summoned up the courage to make any calculation based on the total population of the United States.

I'm no expert on this subject; I'm only an American citizen anxiously concerned about the level of civilization of our great Federation. Perhaps the number of volumes per person per year read by Americans is known. If so, I hope nobody will ever tell me what it is. What I already know hurts me quite enough without hearing more.

For we are not left in peace even to try to make the best of this poor showing. If we were, we might say, "Well, three books a year per person in our greatest American city is something. After all, one can get a great deal from three books a year if they are the right kind." But the American Library Association in general, and Dr. Douglas Waples' researches in particular, hound us out of

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this last shelter. I won't cite any of their figures here, since there are enough painful things in life; I'll only remind you of some facts that lie on the surface, plain to the eye of the non-professional observer. First, children borrow from libraries everywhere about half the number of books read by adults. The able librarian of a public library in a great city makes certain horrifying statements in a recent article: the peak of reading for Americans occurs between the ages of thirteen and twenty-two — in other words during the years when they are under pressure to read because of the demands of teachers and the examinations they must pass. Secondly, among adult readers there is a sizable number of women "repeaters" who weekly borrow two or three light novels with happy endings. Also, a considerable number of registered library users are detective and mystery story fans. If we excluded the volumes taken out from libraries by such people who use library books as inexpensive variations on ice-cream sodas and schooners of beer, what would the total circulation be?

If I may be pardoned a personal reminiscence, I'd like to describe a shopping experience of mine which occurred between the time when I received the invitation to be one of the Committee of Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club, and the day when I wrote my letter of acceptance. That letter had not been written immediately after I received the invitation. I took my time to think over the situation. I didn't like the sound of the proposed enterprise very well. Who was I to tell any fellow Americans what books to buy? (It didn't occur to me that all book reviewers do practically that.) Why didn't they buy their books in stores, as they bought other things? (Yet I live in the country where most of us buy through mail order houses. I didn't think of that.)

Turning these considerations over in my mind, I happened to go down to New York. Having an account with Macy's, I went there to buy a hat. It was a Saturday afternoon, fair and clear, which had brought out masses of people, free from work on the weekly half holiday. The big department store was having some special sales features, as I discovered when I stepped in and found the counters besieged by mobs of shopping women.

I am a very small person, neither tall nor heavy, and I feel a

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well-justified alarm at the idea of trying to hold my own with a crowd of full-sized people, particularly when they are engaged in the serious business of buying, or getting themselves transported. Rush hour in the subway is — no joking — perilous to small people. So is a jam of eager women shoppers. I wandered around for a while, trying vainly to edge myself in sideways to see what merchandise was available. Finally I gave up, deciding that I would walk to Fifth Avenue and try some of the shops on that thoroughfare.

Outside, the crowd on the sidewalks — broad and spacious though they are there — was even more formidable to me than the shoppers' mob. These people were not standing in one place, reaching over each other's shoulders to paw at stockings and hats, and hence comparatively easy for me to dodge. They were purposefully pressing along at the brisk New York speed, on their way to buy or to sell. After being nearly shoved off my feet by chance encounters with rough shoulders or arms of heedless hurriers, I reached the corner of Fifth Avenue and 34th Street, breathing hard, somewhat wild-eyed.

You know the sight that met my eyes there. Up and down, on both sides of the street, the sidewalks were solidly jammed with people. And the avenue was as solidly jammed with automobiles, bumper to bumper, inching their way along, both north and south. Along came a two-decker bus. The roof looked as a floating barn or chicken house must look to a person swept away in a flood. I clambered on board. From the elevated vantage point of a seat on the roof, as far as the eye could reach I could see people on the sidewalks so close together you could have stepped from head to head; cars on the street so close you could have walked from one roof to another. From the cars, from those handsomely dressed, well-fed Americans, their faces animated by the pursuit of the purchase, rose a loud cheerful clatter, as if that vital crowd were a great musical instrument, being played fortissimo.

What a prodigious market place New York was, I thought, settling myself to watch the spectacle. No wonder business concerns established themselves there. The whole world was your buyer. Anybody could sell anything to such armies of people with

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money in their pockets, conditioned wholly to the reflex of making purchases.

As the bus slowly crept north, I remembered that my college-sophomore daughter had asked me to buy her a Spanish dictionary. I reflected that I must be near a well-known bookstore. I would stop off there and get the book. The bus halted. I climbed down, fought my way across the street to the sidewalk, fought my way through the pedestrians streaming in both directions and reached the big glass doors. Flinging my weight against them like a frontier woman fleeing into a house from an Indian raid, I pushed them open and stepped in.

It was like going into a peaceful old cemetery, drowsing on a tranquil October day. The air was still and quiet. Before the counters heaped with books stood the salespeople, their hands hanging at their sides, as still and quiet as the air. Two or three customers, middle-aged like myself, were moving noiselessly about. A churchwarden-like gentleman approached me, murmuring an offer to be of service. Of him I inquired, in the hushed tone suitable to the scene, where the dictionaries were. He pointed up the stairs. I went up, and found myself the solitary customer on the second floor.

Well, I went back to Vermont and wrote a letter accepting (tentatively) the invitation to be a part of a new plan — a new way to try to get my fellow countrymen to buy more books. It was evident that new ways were needed, all the new ways that could be devised.

At that first meeting seventeen years ago, the committee assembled (William Allen White, Henry S. Canby, Heywood Broun, Christopher Morley, and the member from Vermont who writes these lines) found that they knew nothing, but nothing at all, of what the tastes of American readers were. Yet we were none of us young or inexperienced. We had all worked, lived, and had our being in the world of books. We did know quite definitely what was read and liked by the few hundreds of Americans with whom we were personally acquainted. And, having been more or less in touch with the publishing world for years, we had a pretty good idea about the kind of books that could be sold to the few

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thousand book buyers who made it possible for publishers to print the small editions which were then all that was expected in the way of sales. In addition we knew about, and were as stunned and bewildered as anybody else by, the extraordinary, incalculable phenomena of the occasional best sellers which sold sometimes (*Main Street* did, for instance), fifty or a hundred times as many copies as most novels of ordinary good quality; sometimes, by prodigious exception to the rule, half a million copies.

But the population of our huge American Federation is, in round numbers, a hundred and thirty millions. The hugest edition of 500,000 copies meant that only one American out of every 260 had bought a book. The very largest sale of the most sensationally successful wild-fire best seller was, in proportion to the number of American readers, only about a quarter of the sales in Denmark of such a poignant, thoughtful book as *Little Man, What Now?* And as to the usual size of editions of good quality books in this country compared with the number bought in other modern civilized literate nations, it was unbelievably, painfully, humiliatingly, inexplicably low. Would it be possible by a new plan to reach some of those hundreds of thousands of literate Americans who did not yet buy books? And what kind of books would they buy? We newly chosen members of the Committee of Selection were like people standing on an ocean beach and feebly trying to estimate how many quarts of salt water lie within sight.

You may be interested to hear that one of our random guesses was that, in order "to hold the attention" of those using the Book-of-the-Month Club service, we would certainly need to send out a good many detective and mystery stories every year. The few known facts seemed to point that way, didn't they? You would probably have made the same guess yourself. Yet the fact is that in seventeen years we have sent out only two such volumes — a *Sherlock Holmes* collection, and the *Omnibus of Crime*.

Also we hoped — though with no basis in ascertainable fact — that we might, perhaps, once or twice a year, send out a work of non-fiction, without sinking the ship by the weight of rejections from subscribers. For, of course, it was understood that people using the service were to be free to reject our choice. On no other

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basis would responsible people have accepted service on the committee. No other was proposed by the business direction.

Here again our first tentative notions of what might be possible in getting books to American readers in this new way proved grotesquely beside the mark. Year by year we have sent out at least as many non-fiction volumes as novels, and often many more. Yet we were not the only ones to hold the theory that the lightest of "cheerful" fiction was the only kind of reading enjoyed by any large numbers of Americans. Everybody who had any ideas on the subject thought that was probably so. Nobody realized that it was quite footless to try to draw conclusions from the evidence available, so scanty, so scattering was it, in proportion to the total bulk of potential readers.

Even now, after seventeen years of the Book-of-the-Month Club experience in selling books by mail, the records of which have been kept with modern completeness and ordered accuracy, there is not nearly enough accumulated evidence in the files to make anybody with scientific training feel that it is justifiable to draw conclusions from it. But I am only an elderly novelist, not a scientist conditioned to refrain from generalizing on any data less than complete. I'm perfectly willing to make a tentative, incomplete report to other Americans, many of them no more conditioned to the exactitude of laboratory science than I. I take upon my gray head the responsibility for passing on to you some personal guesses of mine, drawn from lists and records, accurate so far as they go, always on condition that it be understood that they don't go nearly far enough to cover the ground.

These records are chiefly based on the numbers accepted or rejected of books proposed to those who use this service. Each month the subscriber receives a description of the book that will be sent to him a month later if he does not signify that he wants something else. Even a laboratory-trained scientist might feel it safe to infer that people don't like the choice made, if large numbers write in to ask for another book. The indications from seventeen years of this evidence show very plainly that not light and trifling, but serious fiction of good literary quality is what readers want.

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One of the most wholly "successful" choices ever made by the Committee of Selection ("successful" in the sense of being accepted by the largest proportion of people using the Book-of-the-Month service) was Sigrid Undset's *Kristin Lavransdatter*. Those who remember that long, gloomy Scandinavian tale, know that no novel was ever less lightly entertaining, was ever a more searchingly earnest invitation to the reader to meditate deeply, even painfully, on the meaning of human life. Book-of-the-Month Club readers not only accepted that novel in the first place in large numbers; *they went on ordering it*, instead of current books, for months and months after its publication date. Don't ask me what such a phenomenon "means." I don't know any more than you do. Perhaps one of the factors to bear in mind is that the lighter, "girl-boy-wedding-bells" fiction can be secured from rental libraries, read and sent back. Perhaps Americans don't want their houses cluttered up permanently with trivial fiction. Some light might be cast on the meaning of this phenomenon by an expert statistician, provided with complete and accurate figures on the circulation of those rental libraries available to subscribers to the Book-of-the-Month Club, if he had a few years to spend in checking the figures and comparing them with the books accepted and bought by Book-of-the-Month subscribers who do not live near a rental library. What's your guess about the real meaning of such a fact? It's as good as mine. Or anybody's.

Without attempting to interpret facts, it seems plain that we could hardly have made a worse guess than that first one, about the possibility that perhaps, once in a while, it would be safe to send out a non-fiction book to that great number of fellow Americans so mysteriously unknown to the members of the Committee of Selection. It has turned out that, if there is not available (as there certainly is not every month) a novel of good sound literary quality, the readers greatly prefer — what kind of book do you suppose? Make a guess. Travel books, or at least books about other places and other peoples. Good ones, of course. That anonymous mass of American book buyers turns out to have no patience with book trash in any form. Now, since a book about other places and other peoples is based on facts, is seldom a pure

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work of the creative imagination, like a novel, or poem, but depends for much of its value on its factual content, there are more books of this kind than novels or poems which measure up well on the scale by which quality in their *genre* is judged. So by and large, books of this sort, of good quality, stand very high on the list of books that seem to be acceptable to great numbers of American readers. Also much in favor are books of biography and autobiography — especially, but by no means exclusively, if the subject is a great American figure. The big, scholarly, richly colored Van Doren life of Benjamin Franklin is an example of this kind of book which is almost sure to be liked and widely accepted.

Yet the question is so complex, so subject to all sorts of incalculable influences, many of them non-literary, that the most informed disinterested observers, if they are honest, still confess themselves completely unable to predict whether a given book will find large numbers of readers. Once the result is known, it begins to be possible to guess at the causes, which are of the most fantastic diversity, one of the most disconcerting being that books which appear in June (and to a lesser degree in July) have less chance than in any other month to find a numerous public. Timeliness as to subject, in all its aspects, seems in general to have a very great influence on the sale of a book. That is, the subject (in non-fiction) to be generally accepted by those using the Book-of-the-Month Club service must be one about which a good deal of curiosity or interest already exists in people's minds. Sometimes such curiosity or interest is a result of the news — like the present interest in books about the war. Sometimes interest has been aroused by more or less sensationally favorable reviews of the book appearing in the press just before it is proposed to its subscribers by the Book-of-the-Month Club. Sometimes the number of acceptances seems influenced — why not? — by getting two books for the price of one. Sometimes the way the book is described seems a determining factor.

Still, by and large, with due allowance made for all variations, oddities, and complexities, it does seem to me safe to affirm that the three leading favorites with the very numerous Book-of-the-Month Club readers are fiction of good literary quality, books

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about other places and other peoples, and biographies and autobiographies. After them with quite an interval, come what are known as "character novels," those stories of personal relations based on Emerson's dictum that "Character is Destiny." Sometimes of course we receive proofs of a book — how they are hailed with enthusiasm! — which possesses several of these "desirable" qualities. Pearl Buck's first great success, *The Good Earth*, was such a one. It is a joy to come on a first-rate book by an author whose name is unknown to you, as was my experience with *The Good Earth*. You feel as an army in active service in the field must feel, when from a totally unexpected direction, fresh, new, vital, splendidly equipped troops come marching into sight, ready to carry on the good fight. That book about Chinese farmers shows how impossible it is to invent pigeonholes for books. It was both a travel book (about other places and other peoples) and also a thoughtful character novel. On two important counts, therefore, it was due to find a welcome from American readers. It did. Dr. Heiser's was a medical book, a book on travel, and an autobiography. James Boyd's noble American novels, like *Drums* and the poignant Civil War story *Marching On*, also combine two elements of attractiveness — history and fiction.

The facts I am citing are established as nearly as possible by all available means of research: books rejected or kept by subscribers to Book-of-the-Month Club service; books criticized or praised in letters; answers to questionnaires carried on in the Gallup poll manner with limited numbers of people carefully selected by scientific methods (well, sort of scientific) as representative of the total number. Running down the list, one finds that after the first-ranking favorites — fiction, travel, biography, autobiography, and novels of character — come books of humor and satire. Books of good advice about practising the great art of living also rank high if the means suggested for improving the quality of everyday life seem to be fairly quick and easy. And after them come problem novels, stories dealing with present-day difficulties encountered by modern men and women in ordinary life. Perhaps these are thought of as presenting good counsel about how to avoid or solve problems in one's life.

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Then come books under the generalizing heading of "current history, current economics, current politics." My own personal impression is that among these, the books least in favor are those on economics. Without benefit of statistics, I should venture to say that whenever we try to give wide circulation to a book on economics, we fail. Yet evidently, from the general character of the books that are accepted and kept, our readers are intelligent, enlightened, informed, serious, and discriminating to a degree and in numbers that nobody would have believed twenty years ago. Books on history they buy readily. Books on economics they will not take as a gift. Why? *You* guess! Who knows? One's hypothesis can range from one extreme to the other, from the familiar accusation that we are a nation of economic illiterates, to the possibility that books on economics are neither ably written nor convincing. Perhaps it is that while people begin to have an idea that a more widespread understanding of economics would help solve many of the worst problems in modern life, they still have a quite accurate notion that economics cannot be understood without serious mental effort.

You may be surprised — and probably as pleased as we are — to learn that the classics, the great works of the past, are in very good favor with the large group of readers under discussion here, and that they rank far above the "pleasant stories with happy endings," which were supposed as a matter of course to rank first of all with Americans. Mystery and detective stories are rather low on the scale of relative favorites, with "love stories and romances" below them. Below love stories come books on science. Wouldn't you have expected, in our scientific age, that a large group of evidently serious readers would rate them much more highly? I should. What kind of books stand lowest on this rough-and-ready, avowedly imcomplete list of reader-preferences? Books on religion. That is, non-fictional books on religion. I'm certainly not going to hazard any guess or comment on that fact, unexpected to me, as it probably is to you. Perhaps it means no more than that people who are especially interested in religion get their reading from magazines and publishing houses specializing in religion.

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Are there any broad generalizations at all about modern readers to be made from the data available in the records of a large book club? Yes, I'll risk a few generalized, personalized impressions, if you will not take them as authoritative statements. One is that the (to me at least) often startling outspokenness of modern books seems to shock the members of the Committee of Selection rather more than it shocks the great mass of modern readers. It has happened more than once that, wincing at our own choice, we have selected as the Book-of-the-Month a work of undeniable value and literary merit, or of some special, unique, timely interest, marred, so it seemed to us, with quite unnecessary coarseness. For the first books of this kind that were sent out, we mentally apologized to our readers. We justified ourselves with the belief that the book was the best one available that month, but we feared a loud explosion of resentful criticism from readers. No explosion took place. In proportion to the numbers of people involved, astonishingly few letters are sent in about such books, and the only kind of coarseness disapproved of seems to be verbal. A situation shocking in itself but described in decorous language does not seem to offend readers. With no graphs or columns of figures to back me up, just from my own memories, I feel fairly sure that in this respect the taste of readers really has greatly changed in the last twenty or thirty years.

A second generalized impression, practically a conviction, is this: there is no such thing as "putting over" an author on the reading public by any system of reviews, publicity, or distribution plan. In the long run, readers themselves decide the fate of books and authors. All that can be done by praise from book reviewers and such a special system of getting books into the hands of readers as the Book-of-the-Month Club, is to hasten the public recognition of a writer who has something to offer that people want. They can only shorten a little the process of giving people the books they want and like. Now, as always, writers make their own public. This basic fact is a tranquillizing subject of meditation to people directly concerned with the effort to get books to readers. They fool themselves if they have any illusions as to their power to "make or break" a book. Any power they have is, in the

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long view, so very limited, that the moral responsibility is by no means too heavy a weight, even for very sensitive consciences.

There is one other generalization I venture to set down here, broad enough, deep enough, vital enough in its bearing, to give it the place of emphasis as the last of these tentative statements. It is one about which there can be, in the nature of things, no statistical proof. But my own feeling about it is backed up by the observation of several other people who have shared the experience of these seventeen years of book selecting. It is this: by and large, what readers seem to like to find in a book is the feeling of contact with living, vital personalities. The traditional classification by subject matter — biography, travel books, humor, fiction, and so on — may be quite irrelevant, since apparently what people enjoy in a book is the meeting with a fellow man who interests them. And that they can find in a wide range of varieties of books — though apparently not in books on economics. In such masterpieces as Tolstoi's great novels, the human beings they meet are the people of the story, such is Tolstoi's unrivalled success in "creating" characters. The same would be true of Sigrid Undset at her best, and of Henry Handel Richardson, whose serious and deep study, *Ultima Thule*, was sent out in great numbers to Book-of-the-Month readers. The travel book that is welcomed is either one which makes the reader feel that he is meeting, really meeting, fellow human beings from far away, or one which is a revelation of the personality of the author.

I knew in my childhood a very old great-uncle, so venerable when I knew him, that his literary tastes were of the pre-Romantic school. To have come under the influence of someone who enormously admired Alexander Pope seems almost as strange an experience as if I had known someone who still believed in the Ptolemaic theory of the universe. I never thought I should be moved to end remarks addressed to twentieth-century readers by a quotation from Pope. But it looks, don't you think, as though the favorite couplet of modern readers of books is, like that of my great-uncle Zadok:

> Know then thyself, presume not God to scan.
> The proper study of mankind is man.

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Three Poems

Will Gibson

Song

Hers is not mine: why must I weep? I am girt
in my skin: I am island: touch cannot leap
the hollows between: she is only the sea: I will keep
to my island, what is the sea's moan to me?

O why do I weep? Is voice not of wind, is flesh
not of water? why is her grief like a wand
to my sleep? what in her far voice fastens a bond
in my bones? I am island: why do I weep?

Piece for a Flyleaf

Gift, be my ghost, grow live in her hand: oh coil
your roots in her brain: be in her bones: spell her
a name you words that will keep like stones in the roil
of wars and weather: ride on her tongue: tell her
remember remember remember

Song for a Parting

O the river I know will run without loss, and leaf
follow leaf, the cool revisits of rain keep
new visits of moss, and light be a prodigal feast
in the swing of the earth: but I have a time,
I have a thief:

I am leased, I am leased: O I am no river where grief
may ride wanton, my flesh is not light, skull
is not leaf: time I lament you is bled of a bone's
drouth: will you hear, when I am the night,
thief! in my mouth?

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New Dimensions and the Arts

William Sener Rusk

THE invention and use of the potter's wheel, of the clock, of the mirror, all before the Industrial Revolution, altered in thoroughgoing fashion the ways in which man adjusted himself to his environment. New perceptions, new conceptions, and new art forms were natural results.

With accelerated speed the field of new experiences has been enlarged in the past century and a half. Camera, wire and wireless communication, assembly lines, railroads, and airplanes are cases in point. In some of their aspects the new perceptions thus encountered have been organized into concepts, and at least some tentative art forms have appeared. Science has given the experiences meaning; art is beginning to arrange and humanize them; the spiritual values inherent in them have scarcely begun to appear.

And now a catastrophic complex of experiences, encountered twice within a short period, has befallen mankind. Science has undertaken with giant strides to further destruction prior to rebuilding; yet, even while the devastation continues, it is enlarging the scope of its beneficent services to mankind in such fields as nutrition, medicine, and social patterns. New perceptions are stimulating the human senses, new conceptions the mind and imagination, new intuitions the spirit. No time is being permitted for a leisurely organization of these new experiences, much less for their interpretation and sublimation. The experience is encountered, the attempt may be made to record it in photograph or to describe it in words, and then, perhaps, the end; or, perhaps, an endless round or crescendo of similar experiences.

It may be worth while to review some of the new experiences, and to put to one side the thorny question of the relationship of art and war — whether, for example, the artist should be encouraged merely to illustrate it, or to psychograph it, or to ignore

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it. After all, Francisco Goya, who could do all three, was a rare phenomenon. The sources of our information will be the radio newscasts, color motion pictures, illustrated journals and periodicals, and a few of the books wherein pertinent experiences have been reported. With as much clarity as possible, the perceptions will be noted, then their conceptive relations and their integration into whole experiences — wind and sand; light, space, and motion; the stars.

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The new experiences are reported as sense stimuli, as the core of new conceptions, and occasionally as data for integrated experiences ready for expression. They are reported by camera and by words — both mobile forms of communication, one using the eye, the other the ear — but both limited to surface phases, visual in the one case, meaningful in the other. They are seldom sufficiently organized to lend themselves immediately to aesthetic projection or embodiment.

In the Korda chromatic film, "One of Our Planes Is Missing," the spectacular tracer bullets streaking the sky and the floral forms of exploding shell made vivid impressions. On the newscasts the listener receives similar impressions in the word pictures he hears day by day. During one of the recent raids on Munich a bombed oil tank was said to have "mushroomed" up, lighting the sky as by a sunset, or as if someone had touched an electric pushbutton in a dark room. Mechanized warfare on the ground has been described as marked by globes of flame when hurled bombs strike, by orange flames and black smoke when T N T packages explode, and by startling effects when crouching men camouflaged as bushes rise and walk away or when traps are successful in catching lumbering tanks. The weight of the human body during a dive bomb attack is reported as sixfold its normal heaviness. Holocausts of fire over target areas have been likened to molten seas with bubbles exploding amid cones of light and columns of smoke.

A widely diffused source of information, similarly, is found in the illustrated newspapers and magazines. The value of such ma-

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terial to the designer of posters today and to the creative artist tomorrow is patent. Pictures of bomb attacks have shown the silhouette effect of planes against streaks and masses of light, as incendiaries, flak, and tracer bullets interweave in spirals of light. The answering anti-aircraft fire has revealed contrasted light and dark forms, sometimes in silhouette, sometimes in metallic bulk, set in complex patterns of explosive light. Also a phase of the sensations of air warfare is seen in the pictures of airplanes aloft in the sky, apparently weightless and motionless, and pictures of parachutists, bulky as they leave the door of the plane, their parachutes billowing as they open, the men dangling as they fall before landing in bulbous heaps. Kinaesthetic sensations are certain to be felt by the spectator. But perhaps the pictures that connote the most complex tensions are those of a fleet of planes lined up for a takeoff, those flying in tight formation, or those landing on water or on land, sometimes decorously, sometimes in fatal crashes.

The world of ships is not as novel as that of planes. But a larger number of persons than heretofore are sharing nautical experiences, and a much larger number are vicariously reacting to them sensuously through photography. The pictures show the open rigging of ships as they roll, their slender forms interpenetrating space; ships that have been torpedoed, turning over, tilting, and settling; views of wide stretches of open sea dotted with the units of a convoy, at night, at noon, at twilight; or, the abandonment of a ship, with ant-like creatures, once its trained crew, swarming over the huge sides of the sinking craft. And, then, the launching of a ship may be seen, indicating the great bulk cramped in small quarters with contrasted groups of those left on shore and those high above on the bridge as the ship moves slowly down the runway.

Tanks with their clumsy bulk are shown as they evolve on assembly lines and as they barge awkwardly over uneven surfaces and perhaps are caught in hidden traps. The patterns into which the air photographer maps the earth; flapping, snapping, bellying, and inert dripping of flags, now in, now out of the breeze; novel factory interiors, wind tunnels, and drying chambers, wall and

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ceiling studded with infra-red lights; centrifugal, but highly functional, forms of the great guns on their huge rubber tires, or clumsy forms of human beings moving cautiously with mine detectors — all are new in their total impact on human eye and mind. A thousand-pound missile dropping into space, Fujiyama seen through the periscope of a submarine, or the sight of a supply ship exploding like an aquatic galaxy must also increase human sense data and suggest new relationships and meanings. Even the old elements of ice and fire and shadow take on new connotations in their monstrous sizes, and envisaged in the midst of danger.

II

Not only are airplanes the most distinctive source of the new perceptions and experiences which at some future time may find aesthetic embodiment and spiritual intensity, but the literature describing human reaction to them has assumed a mass and variety sufficient to require attention. The reader may urge that an aesthetic pattern is already being woven. Even before the present war Anne Morrow Lindbergh in her charming *North to the Orient* had characterized the new point of view by the very title. No longer was the world a flat Mercator surface, but a globe where the arc of a great circle was the shortest distance between two points. Mrs. Lindbergh told of the take-off with jolts changing to a glide, and of the growing distances and the increasing realization that *away* was *down*. The luminous colors and the relief modelling of a panoramic world, the continuous hum of motor and vibration of plane, the growing familiarity with ice, fog, clouds, and the welcoming flares of the destined port were freshly described. The terrified feelings of man in such daring contact with nature was also indicated, and the possible form such new human experience might take was suggested in the final pages. "One could sit still and look at life from the air . . . arrested, frozen into form . . . stillness . . . like light . . . motion [taking] on a slow grace."

Antoine De Saint-Exupéry in *Wind, Sand and Stars* described further the stirring experience of the flyer, the silences of the

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upper atmosphere, the deafness and gruffness of the pilots after a flight until they oriented themselves once more to humankind. He told of the world of clouds, now precipitous, now canyon-like, now like a sea of waves, now like cotton-wool, or again like slime. It is a world of weather reports, of mechanisms, of maps, one where the lost flyer may reach for a star mistaken for an airport. The air takes on personality as one sinks in a down-current or is buoyed, weightlessly, in an up-current. In a time of storm, "plane geometry" is "awhirl" in a "jumble of perspectives." Mountains deceptively take on the character of eagerly-sought landmarks, or of drifting mines when one is lost in menacing fogs. The sea may suggest a "shattered mirror" or a surface covered with "white, motionless trees." The desert may be loved for its loneliness and color and silence, and again be terrifying in its tracklessness and threat of dire thirst. The familiar world of humdrum humanity is exchanged by the flyer for one of meteorology, of celestial mechanics, of geological formations. When the flyer says he "slipped between the towering walls and giant pillars of the Andes . . . in the silence of cathedral snows," he may be accused of fine writing, but he may also be reporting on experiences that will encourage new art forms.

In *Flight to Arras* the same gifted writer relates his experiences set in the tragic framework of a nation in a hopelessly inadequate struggle against invasion. The identification of the flyer with his plane is stressed, as well as the opportunity to think things through which flying encourages, as roads crowded with refugees fleeing like insects, villages being blown to bits, and haycocks naïvely used to withstand tanks pass lazily below.

Richard Hillary in *Falling Through Space* emphasizes the complete spaciousness of the upper air when planes far above and far below are vitally concerned with the formation they are flying in. As neighboring planes fall, they hurtle by like meteors. He tells something, too, of the sensation of falling, half-conscious, of the descent by jerks, of the informal raft made by a life-jacket and partially opened parachute. More recently, Paratrooper Richard R. Clarke in the May issue of the *American Magazine* has described in detail the kinaesthetic sensations of his training ex-

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perience. Such a manual as the one issued by the Bureau of Aeronautics, U. S. Navy, *The Effects of Flight*, tells of the physical and psychological hazards of such a career.

Stanley Hope in "So It's Happened to Me," reported in the *New York Times*, speaks of the ability of the pilot to gauge speed by the sound of the wind, and by a certain "hard feeling." He notes that black changes to red and then to normal color as consciousness returns to a flyer who has bailed out.

W. L. White, through his interlocutors, in *Queens Die Proudly* tells of the love flyers have for their machines, and he even attempts to distinguish with words and letters the sounds of air combat — the rattle of the racing tracer bullets, and the pounding of the cannon on contact. When a gas tank is struck, he speaks of the rising, hissing sound, followed by a "p-p-ph-f-f-e-O-FFF," and if luck is out, by the roar of exploding bombs. He also notes the "blossoming" of a parachute as it opens, the return of a damaged plane to its base, "fluttering in like a wounded bird," the limited vision of the battle stations, and the development of a sense whereby one can move by touch in dark areaways. (In fact, training flyers to "see" in the dark is now reported as routine.)

Finally, Howard A. Kelly III in a letter posthumously printed in the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* wrote graphically of the experiences of participating in an air raid — the detailed preparation, the quickening speed of the planes and growing tension, the final inter-phone wisecracks, the appearance of black puffs hanging in the air "whispering" as enemy bullets appear in the vicinity, the twisting, turning, diving of the plane in an effort to avoid hostile fire, the gun-like reports and sudden pain as windshield or shoulder is struck, the apparent "crawling" motion over the target area, as tracer bullets seem to approach "lazily" and suddenly swish by, the release of the bombs as indicated by the signal lights on the instrument panel, and, then, the withdrawal from the danger zone with wounds and damages and relaxed emotions.

III

But the reactions to the new perceptions and the construction of new conceptions are not taking place in isolation. They tie in

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suggestively with analogous ideas in other fields of human experience; they recall certain aesthetic expressions of past and present; and they foreshadow art forms, when organized with totalities of experience, ready for refinement and interpretation.

The most striking example of the first relationship is doubtless the new science of political geography, Anglo-American in origin, and distorted by the diseased Nazi mentality into *geopolitik*. It is characteristic of the new global thought-forms. With both good and evil implications, it is becoming clear that "space is power." The "heartland" of the "world island," made potent for the first time by continental railroads and airways, it is pointed out, is arrayed against (or with) the "coastlands," until recently impregnable through seapower. Population aggregations, industrial foci, and rainfall averages are freshly significant to an air-minded world. In the past, human imagination was stirred by distance; now, by space.

Art forms of past and present, which derive partially from experiences analogous to those of the modern airman, readily suggest themselves. The denial of gravity inherent in Gothic construction is clearly parallel to the poised airplane, apparently weightless and motionless. The space relations of a Sancta Sophia suggest in a microcosm the macrocosm of the new world of space. Naum Gabo interpenetrates planes in his sculpture and Henry Moore fuses projection and cavity in his stone abstractions.

Indeed, the camera, which is helping to record and clarify the new war experiences, is likewise busy with revelations of insect and floral forms — the thousand facets of the eye of the housefly or the cantilevered construction of a leaf. Not only is the camera lens able with its "super-eye" to reveal the normally invisible, but with its incredible speed it can atomize motion. H. E. Edgerton and J. R. Killian in *Flash!* have discussed the amazing results of the latter development. Yesterday the camera was used to echo painting, whether representative or abstract; today, with a radically developed instrument and a world in convulsion, it is moving toward magic. Tomorrow, it may achieve music.

Similarly, the new slab architecture of Brazil or of Rockefeller Center, the bridges and tunnels and scenic motorways, and the

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panoramic spreads of cities illuminated with mosaics of lights, suggest experiences of light and space not unlike those being underlined by the new warfare. Already they are both providing content and seeking aesthetic form. With bridges flowing, elevator shafts spiralling, biotechnic forms evolving, and slab architecture interpenetrating, the new experiences need not be stillborn. Whether of the pedestrian, the motorist, or the airman, sense data of experience demand clarification and organization.

IV

It is as idle as it is tempting to speculate on the appropriate forms for the expression of these mounting experiences. Perhaps such art contests as the one sponsored recently by *Life* for members of the armed forces will indicate trends from time to time. The loneliness of a flyer in a spacious universe may indeed lead him to prefer mystic to plastic forms, yet everywhere unaccustomed sights and sounds and feelings are being encountered. When a flyer drops, his weight increases many times; a plane racing hundreds of miles an hour seems poised; mountains seem to be lakes, clouds to be sea. New York and London are a few hours apart; perspective relations are thrown awry in a world of spherical geometry. Awkwardness assumes normality.

Will new dances provide the significant form? Will television suggest the answer; will plastics? Will abstractions increasingly be chosen when one human being tries to express his experience significantly to another? Is Lyonel Feininger with his sensitive patterns a forerunner, or Katherine S. Drier with her "40 Variations," or Kandinsky with his mobile color patterns? Will such a term as "falling" lose its nightmare connotation, and a "fallen angel" be explained by our descendants as an indication of their ancestors' fear of falling?

Will science come to busy itself with *knowing*, art limit itself to *doing*, and religion to *being*? Will the new art forms give expression to a new cultural synthesis, wherein the art and form relationship of classical times, and the art and prudence relationship of medieval times will change to an art and person relationship, and human history follow a new beam toward its predestined goal?

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The Peshtigo Fire

Stewart Holbrook

IN A logging camp where I worked twenty-odd years ago was a remarkably fine chronicler of the woods named John Cameron. In his half century in timber from Maine to Oregon he had seen a good many things, among them events of the first importance in America's oldest industry — lumber — the effects of some of which are being felt today by Americans who know nothing of the causes.

John Cameron was a veritable Nestor of the woods, almost immemorially old and grizzled, but durable, a *lignum vitae* man. He was squat and solid, and his face and neck were tanned and seamed by the sun and by winds that had blown upon him all the way from the Penobscot to the Columbia. He wore a beard like General Grant's. Moreover, John was a man of intellectual probity, as careful of his facts as he was of the figures of logs which he set down on his scale sheets. I came to have great faith in his memory of past events, a memory which both time and no little research have proved to have been honest and accurate.

I

Sitting on the deacon seat in camp, while winds howled through the towering Douglas fir and the rain came down like bullets, I used to look into the fire of the barrel-stove and do my best to keep John telling of his life in the timber. The fact that he was a marked man sat lightly on his shoulders, although he was conscious of the distinction. For you must know that John Cameron was a survivor of the Great Peshtigo Disaster, words that are spoken with capitals by those who know the significance of Peshtigo. Veterans of Waterloo and Gettysburg have had no greater distinction.

This disaster, one of the greatest in American history, occurred in October seventy-three years ago, and through a fate so ironic

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that perverse gods must have arranged it, is known hardly to one American in ten thousand.

The time was 1871. The scene was Peshtigo, a booming lumber town in northeast Wisconsin which stood on both sides of the swift Peshtigo River that flowed southeast to enter Lake Michigan's Green Bay, six miles distant. A narrow-gauge railroad connected the town with its port, called Peshtigo Harbor, whence lumber and woodenware products were shipped to Chicago at the far southern end of the big lake. The town of close to two thousand people had been built up quickly around the sawmill and factory of the Peshtigo Company, a wealthy concern headed by the eminent William B. Ogden of Chicago, with Isaac Stephenson of Marinette second in command.

Every working day the company's factory turned out 600 common pails, 170 tubs, 250 fish kits, 5,000 broom handles, 50 boxes of clothes pins, 45,000 shingles, 8 dozen barrel heads, 260 paint pails, 200 tobacco pails, 200 keelers, and 200 kannakins. (Keelers were small oval tubs often used as bathtubs for babies. A kannakin was a special sort of wooden bucket.) And every working day the company's sawmills — one at Peshtigo, one at the Harbor — made a lot of lumber. The company employed, in camps and mills, no fewer than 800 men.

Remote as Peshtigo was from the rest of the world in 1871, it was soon to have direct rail connection with Chicago. The Chicago & North Western was building through from Fort Howard (now West Green Bay) to Menominee, Michigan. Large gangs of men were slashing through the woods, clearing the right-of-way, and incidentally planting the means of destruction, not only of Peshtigo and all it contained, but also of a vast empire of timber. For the railroad builders at that time made the slash (the debris of their clearing operations) into long piles and set them on fire, leaving them unattended to burn as they would.

The town was lively with transient labor, with newly arrived settlers, and with drummers for everything from saws and axes to Dr. Perry Davis' Painkiller, "Friend of Man & Beast." They were cared for at the roomy Peshtigo House and three other hotels, and were entertained at four sizable saloons. The forest began right at

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Peshtigo's village limits and ran west and north — how far, no man knew except timber cruisers and Indians — broken by several natural clearings in a hardwood area a few miles from Peshtigo. These clearings, where farmers already had taken root, were known as the Upper, the Middle, and the Lower Sugar Bush.

Romantic novelists to the contrary, social life in the United States has always kept close to the frontier. In this so-called raw lumber settlement of the big woods a Congregational meeting house reared its spire on the east side of town. On the west side Catholics had almost completed a church and parish house. A small Episcopalian society met in Good Templars Hall. The Good Templars themselves were rehearsing, in October of '71, a "side-splitting farce, The Vermont Wool Grower," to be followed by "the great moral spectacle, Ten Nights in a Bar Room." The village had a roomy schoolhouse. There were a number of stores, including one of a druggist who read many books and would lend them to literates. Thus the village was taking on a permanent form, with a likely future. And to top its civic pride and dignity, Luther B. Noyes had just started the *Marinette and Peshtigo Eagle*, a weekly paper as large as a small blanket. True, the *Eagle* was printed in nearby Marinette; but the paper carried much news of Peshtigo, and Peshtigo folks read it intently.

Editor Noyes started publication in June of 1871, just in time to cover the biggest story the paper was ever to know. But there were a few preliminary items ahead of the Big Story, many of them having a direct bearing on it. On September 9 the *Eagle* noted that "Mulligan's brigade of choppers, axes in hand, armed and equipped as the railroad authorities direct, 32 strong, rank and file, passed this place on Saturday en route for the north side of the river, to clear for the railroad." On the 16th the paper noted ". . . heavy fires northeast of the village [Peshtigo] in the woods." Mulligan's brigade was doing its work. On the 30th the *Eagle* reported that ". . . last Sunday all hands turned out to fight fire in the woods near the Peshtigo factory."

The woods around Peshtigo, and indeed much of the woods of Wisconsin and Michigan as well, were ready for fire. A drought lay on the land from early May through September, with only one

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rain, "a smart shower" on July 8, to break it. A contemporary said that the very atmosphere seemed to pant, and everything along Green Bay was parched and cracked. The swamps of tamarack and the marshes of cedar were "black, dry and cheerless." Continuous small forest fires throughout hot September had destroyed the one telegraph line into the region. But in those days, and for many years after, little or no heed was paid to fires in the woods unless and until they actually threatened personal property, like houses and barns. Such were the weather conditions at the end of September.

II

On the 8th of October, Peshtigo awoke to find a copper sun in the sky, and a village that lay baked and sultry in an autumn heat such as no man, red or white, could remember. The air was deathly still. Flocks of birds were seen to form and fly away, but not one made a sound of any kind. By noon the sun disappeared entirely, and a strange yellow half-light, coming from no visible source and ghastly in its effect on men and things, lighted the sawdust streets and plank sidewalks and made the swift, silent waters of the Peshtigo River look bilious.

Up from the Harbor that morning came 200 new laborers fresh from Chicago, who were going to lay rails. They lurched up and down West Front Street, shouting, "emitting horrible blasphemies," and performing generally in the manner of mass drunks. As for the solid villagers, they attended church services, then sat down to heavy Sunday dinners. The unmarried employees of the Peshtigo Company had an extra-good meal in the company's rambling big boarding house.

The afternoon wore on, hot and silent — and smoky enough to make eyes run. Suppertime saw black and white ashes drifting through screenless windows and getting into the food. When night closed down over the village in the forest, folks could plainly see a sullen red over the treetops to the southwest. The smoke thickened. John Cameron, in from a cruise of timber, sat on the steps of the company's boarding house and at about nine o'clock thought he could hear a new noise in the night, a low

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moaning, soft, deep, far-off, that gradually changed to a sullen roar. Cameron had heard big winds in his time, and big cataracts, too, but nothing like this sound that was now welling up, back there in the big timber.

The wind rose for a few moments, rustling the trees that still stood in the village. Then it fell, and there was silence again, except for that deep, steady roar, far off to the southwest. Or, Cameron began to wonder, *was* it far off?

As he peered into the night that seemed to be growing lighter by the minute, John Cameron saw a whirling slab of fire come hurtling out of nowhere and drop fair into the sawdust street. He brushed his streaming eyes, but this slab of fire was no illusion. It was followed by another and another. Cameron yelled a long incoherent cry. More fire rained down.

In a flash, it seemed, the splintered pine sidewalks of Peshtigo were blazing. Startled men and women crowded onto doorsteps. The top of a house leaped with sudden flame. There came a crashing and deep booming from the surrounding forest, while underneath all was a steady roar that was greater than Niagara's. Now a deer, wide-eyed and shaking, flitted out of the forest and stood stock still in the midst of town dogs who whimpered and sniffed but made no attempt to attack the wild creature. Down the street trotted a legion of housecats, pausing to look at what was behind them.

City folk are given to thinking that things happen in a leisurely way in the back country, where life all but stands still. City folk should have stood on the smoldering streets of Peshtigo that night. In less than five minutes all hell rode into town on the back of a rising hurricane.

It was a seething, searing hell, and the hurricane it was riding traveled almost as fast as light itself. It swept in so suddenly that no man could say for certain what happened in the next few moments. What is assuredly and horribly known is that some forty men, their senses blown away in that first blast of flame, rushed into the Company's boarding house and then and there were burned to cinders.

Others ran to the bridge that crossed the river, and there ran

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headlong into people from the other side of town. Human beings, horses, cows, wagons, met in the middle of the bridge. Now the structure itself began to burn. Here was tragic confusion, a frantic, struggling mass. Some were trampled, others went overboard in the crush, to fall into the river where they must swim, or drown. Now the big sawmill, by the east end of the bridge, started burning like a vast furnace. The very logs in the mill pond began to smoke, then to light up with flame.

John Cameron and many others were fleeing down the east bank of the river below the dam, where many drowned and others lived it out. On the way they saw things they never forgot. Never. They saw horses and cattle, and men and women, stagger a brief moment over the smoking sawdust streets, then go down to burn brightly like so many flares of pitch-pine. Forty years afterward an ancient man's voice choked when he told of watching pretty Helga Rockstad as she ran down a blazing sidewalk, her blond hair streaming out behind and of seeing the long blond hair leap into a flame that stopped Helga in her tracks. Looking at the spot next morning, he related, he had found two nickel garter buckles and a little mound of white-gray ash.

The river was truly the safest place in Peshtigo that night, and even the river wasn't too safe. Clinging to a log in the water young Amelia Slaughter, aged nine, watched while Peshtigo burned on both banks and the river filled with human beings and animals, wallowing, swimming, rearing, bellowing, shouting. She saw Mrs. Heidenworth struggling and apparently drowning; then, grasping the long horn of a passing cow, towed out of sight and to safety.

Down past the refugees in the river a burning log floated swiftly; presently came more logs, all afire and hissing as they moved — a swift, steady procession of danger and often of death, for the plunging logs knocked people off their legs and into the water, stunned them, then went on, flaming and hissing like some special engines of destruction turned loose by the fire devils who seemed to have taken charge of Peshtigo. A bit later, little Amelia heard a roar, and felt a concussion of air that nearly stunned her. It was the factory going up in a tremendous explosion. Out of the

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factory came a torrent of fire in the shape of thousands of blazing buckets and tubs and shingles which tore through the night like small meteors and fell everywhere like rain. . . . Between nine and ten o'clock the entire town of Peshtigo was wiped clean.

III

Peshtigo was merely the fire-center that night. The flames had taken a ghastly toll there, but fire had also devastated the Sugar Bush districts, and swept on north, leaping the broad Menominee River and rushing on into Michigan, destroying the settlement of Birch Creek. Nor was this all. New Franken and Robinsonville, on the long lean Peninsula formed of Brown, Kewanee, and Door counties, had been destroyed. The same fire roared into New Brussels and Little Sturgeon, while the religious Belgian settlers shouted that the Last Days were here. And so they were for many.

Three months later a sort of official death list was made up. Six hundred had died in Peshtigo; one hundred and twenty died in the Lower Sugar Bush, seventy-five in the Middle, sixty in the Upper. The total dead on the Peninsula was seventy-five; and at Birch Creek, Michigan, twenty-two. The toll on isolated homesteads, and at logging camps and trappers' cabins was set at two hundred. All of these were not "probable" but certain deaths, a minimum figure which totalled up to 1,152. It was the greatest toll taken by a single forest fire in the United States. Of forest land, the flames swept 1,280,000 acres, a veritable empire of timber.

Rain began falling on October 9 — just twenty-four hours too late to be of much help. On the 14th the *Eagle* came out with a Fire Extra. It was a single sheet, about one quarter the size of the usual blanket-size format, printed on both sides. Editor Noyes apologized for this tabloid, saying it was due to the fact that his paper supply had not arrived from Chicago; Chicago, so he had heard rumored by a man on a passing steamboat, had had a fire of its own.

Editor Noyes' "rumor" about Chicago, of course, was fact. At approximately the same time that fire swept into Peshtigo on the

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night of the eighth, the notorious cow kicked over the celebrated lantern of the immortal Mrs. O'Leary in the big city at the foot of the lake. While John Cameron and other citizens were fleeing to the Peshtigo river, residents of Chicago's South Side were fighting to cross the bridges to the north side of its river. The Chicago Fire went directly into history, and ultimately into the movies.

Chicago got virtually all the publicity. Yet only about two hundred lives were lost in Chicago. And I doubt gravely that the destruction of property in the city was so great a loss to the United States as was the laying waste of more than one and a quarter million acres of timber land; in more ways than one Wisconsin is still paying for the Peshtigo Fire. The world immediately heard of Chicago's loss. Troops came to keep order. Relief trains rolled in. Queen Victoria, Charles Darwin, Alfred Lord Tennyson, and thousands of less eminent Britons contributed books to found a new library in Chicago. Everything came to the blackened city as quickly and as bountifully as is the custom of America in disasters.

It was six weeks, however, before even *Harper's Weekly*, the news-magazine of the time, learned of the horror that had swept through the Wisconsin backwoods; then it devoted many pages of text and woodcuts to depicting the disaster. But the big city held the spotlight, for Americans apparently cannot get excited over more than one disaster at a time. When I talked with six survivors of Peshtigo, in 1942, all were bitter about Chicago. "Nobody in the United States," vowed one old lady, who had clung to a log in the river that night, "ever heard of the Peshtigo Fire." That is not quite true, but it is almost true. Even in Wisconsin few school children or college men and women seem yet to have heard of it.

IV

On November 18, five weeks after the fire, Editor Noyes was moved to note that winter had struck hard on the heels of the disaster. "As the blasts of winter howl a requiem over the ruins of Peshtigo," he wrote in the *Eagle*, "the survivors will hear in imagination the hissing, crackling flames, the roar of the tornado

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like that of an earthquake, and mingled with the terrific din will come shuddering on the fiery blast the helpless wail of the innocents who yielded up their lives as the storm went howling and shrieking by."

The tragedy of it was that the innocents had died in vain. Not then, nor for many years, were the American people, either in Wisconsin or elsewhere, ready to do anything to prevent disasters like that at Peshtigo. Peshtigo, indeed, was simply Wisconsin's *first* great forest fire. It was the greatest in loss of life, but in the area damaged cannot be compared with the 3,000,000-acre fire which swept the state one day and night in 1894. In that year, too, the Hinckley fire in Minnesota took 418 lives in the timber. In 1910, forest fires in Minnesota, Montana, and Idaho killed more than one hundred fire fighters and forty-two civilians, and removed an immense forest. The Moose Lake and Cloquet forest fires, also in Minnesota, took close to 600 lives one night in 1918.

It was as a result of the fires of 1910 — forty years after Peshtigo — that the United States really began to give serious consideration to the protection of her forests. That the protection is still far from adequate is to be seen in these national statistics: forest fires in the United States today average 172,000 yearly, and they burn up the better part of 36,000,000 acres of forest each year. That more lives have not been lost in recent years is due chiefly to better roads and transportation, and to an immense amount of good luck. As late as 1936 I saw a forest fire in Oregon that took an even dozen lives; and another in 1933 that took but one life yet destroyed twelve billion feet of timber — enough to have supplied the lumber needs of the entire United States in that year.

This ghastly waste goes on year after year, in spite of the finest forest fire control agencies in the world — those of the federal forest service, the various state forestry departments, and many private associations and patrols. These agencies are doing fine work in the quick detection of fires and in their suppression. What we need, what we must have, is more prevention.

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Cooperative Research

Caryl P. Haskins

In scientific history . . . the greater steps are generally synthetic, the smaller ones, analytic. — GEORGE SARTON.

WITHIN recent historical times, and especially within the past one hundred years, the impact of science and of scientific research upon the material conditions of our society has been so great and science itself has become so specialized a branch of learning that we sometimes forget how closely knit it is to the general fabric of human affairs and how vulnerable to human moods. Science and research, for all their elaboration of detail, are living, vital, but also fallible organisms, exalted only as human nature itself is exalted, as often led by the trends or fashions of an era as leading or molding them. So science has experienced its swings from conservatism to radicalism, from caution to adventurousness, from reaction to advancement, and back again, and with each cycle we hope there has come some net gain in comprehension, exactly as in other areas of human affairs. Nowhere is this more strikingly evident than in the history of cooperative research.

The history of scientific effort can be split broadly into three fairly distinct phases, each embodying a marked swing toward or away from cooperative research and each yielding to its successor only partially and with reluctance. The first and second of these periods are principally of historical interest today, although many features of the second are still in evidence. The last, most dynamic, and perhaps most significant of the three, is now in the ascendant phase and is of vital contemporary interest. This is the period of a much closer integration of the sciences among themselves, the era of truly cooperative research. Possibly it is still only in its infancy.

Science has always been regarded as a highly individualized

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pursuit and its votaries as confirmed individualists. It shares this trait, of course, with every other form of original endeavor, but it is probable that the characteristic has never since been so marked as it was in the days of the real youth of scientific effort when men of science were few and far between. This was the stage when the integration of the various branches of science, themselves still but ill defined, was secured through the work of the individual great thinker and his profoundly influential school. It was a time of primitive unity. Leonardo da Vinci could properly claim to be acquainted with, if not the master of, all the science of his day. Galileo, while making contributions to astronomy as fundamental as those of any age, could still occupy the chair of military science and tactics at Padua. Bacon with his inductive reasoning, Albertus Magnus with his keen appreciation of the human value of science, Descartes with his logical geometry, Newton with his "Newtonian Method" of investigation, Franklin with his versatility, deeply influenced all subsequent technical learning. Even so late as the middle of the nineteenth century the genius of Faraday could still contribute mightily to basic knowledge in such divergent fields as electromagnetic theory and the chemical structure of rubber. Pasteur, in a single lifetime, could elucidate the phenomenon of chemical isomerism and discover the existence of bacteria and their role in disease. Science, like a living organism, had a generalized beginning and its early geniuses, like the first cells of a plant or animal embryo, could perform many functions. Differentiation had not yet proceeded far enough to threaten a serious loss of unity over the whole front of scientific investigations.

These years of basic scientific unity, from the fifteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century, witnessed the rise of very many of the scientific societies of the western world which are of the greatest significance in research today. For the most part they began as associations of men whose scientific interests would be thought of in our own time as immensely, if not suspiciously, broad. They came together primarily to enjoy the intellectual stimulus of an exchange of parallel, or conflicting, scientific views rather than to supplement their respective funds of scientific

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knowledge. Usually they were men of independent means, or men whose living was furnished by a patron or a pension; their occupation as scientists and their membership in the scientific brotherhoods were seldom, if ever, undertaken for purposes directly concerned with earning a living. The prototype was surely the platonic academy of Cosimo de Medici founded at Florence in 1438. And the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome; the "Invisible College" in England, later to become the Royal Society; the salon of Étienne Pascal in Paris, which in 1666 became the Royal Academy of Sciences, all were close to the tradition. So, too, were our own American Philosophical Society, outgrowth of Franklin's Junto Club, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of whose principal early protagonists and promoters was President John Adams. In England, again, the Royal Institution, founded in 1799 by Count Rumford, where Davy and Faraday both were to work, and the British Association for the Advancement of Science grew to somewhat the same pattern. In Russia, Peter the Great, ever alert to developments beyond his western borders, founded the Russian Academy of Sciences. It was the day of altruistic but primitive research, when the development of science, like that of other purely intellectual pursuits, was slow and its participants represented but a tiny fraction of all mankind. There was little threat of a loss of unity in research, for the field to be integrated was relatively narrow.

The growing practical utility of science in everyday affairs, however, was soon to bring a fundamental change in the pattern of its development. The applicability of science to warfare had been evident as early as the days of da Vinci and of Galileo. Early scientific workers were well aware of this fact and traded on it to secure the favor of powerful patrons, or otherwise to improve their opportunity for more detached studies. But the First Industrial Revolution brought home with stunning force the practical applicability of scientific research, and with the First Industrial Revolution the whole structure and philosophy of science underwent a subtle, but basic, evolution. Science had played a very real part in the invention and development of the steam engine, which soon showed itself a Titan capable of chang-

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ing the face of the earth. Lavoisier and Dalton, and their pupils and successors, revolutionized the chemistry of their time and made possible the inception of a heavy chemical industry that was soon to turn upon its creators with an incessant demand for more Lavoisiers and Daltons.

Early in the nineteenth century science was beginning to assume a new role as the handmaiden of the young technical industries appearing everywhere in England. By the middle of the century technical industry spread to Germany, where it rooted in peculiarly fertile soil. Germany, newly stirring from her long cultural sleep, was emerging upon the world stage. With a national consciousness just appearing, with intensive ambitions in trade and military spheres awakening, what nation had greater need of industrial science? With the reform of her universities, what nation had better facilities for cultivating it? The research of Lavoisier, Dalton, and others had indeed founded a chemical industry in England, and now the Germans proceeded to develop it to magnitudes and intricacies hitherto undreamed of. Now it was no longer Lavoisiers and Daltons that the chemical industry wanted, but legions of specialized servants, whose proficiencies in particular branches of their trade would be unquestioned, yet the breadth of whose knowledge was relatively unimportant. Germany probably led the field in that day, but in Britain and France technical industry was not slow to follow the pattern of this new awakening, and across the ocean American industry was shifting from the farmstead to the factory and its need of practical science was rapidly expanding, too.

These industrial developments and demands had a far-reaching effect upon the circumstances and the thought-patterns of a new generation. Science, and the field of effort that it offered, soon became much more widely known, and very many young men were attracted to it who in earlier generations had gone into other professions. This in itself led to a rapid acceleration of scientific work and an expansion of scientific knowledge into the details of many fields which an earlier generation had only outlined. This condition alone would have threatened the unity of science and research, even if the new class of scientific workers had been

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like the older ones. But, partly as a consequence of the new popularity of science and partly because of the economic trends of the times, this was not true. The newer scientists in general were far from men of inherited wealth or leisure, with time and inclination to investigate the phenomena of nature purely for the sake of knowledge. They were in the main talented young artisans, poor young students — men who enjoyed daily contact with natural phenomena, to be sure, but who faced the earnest necessity of exchanging their skills for bread. Competition among scientific students to fulfill the technical entrance requirements of industry became keen. Industry on its part continually raised its specialized requirements — perceiving that the success of its technical research, and thus indirectly its own business success, was an intimate function of the depth of knowledge of its technical workers in their detailed fields. The technical student, while required to gain a more and more comprehensive special knowledge of his subject, was at the same time forced to prepare himself in a very minimum of time by the pressure on him to become economically self-supporting. Caught thus between Scylla and Charybdis, the average young industrial scientist of the day specialized very early, acquired a very insufficient appreciation of the relation of his field to the whole of science at the beginning of his career, and tended to lose interest in this relationship as his professional life progressed.

Thus a very precious element of scientific philosophy was lost to large numbers of working scientists after the middle of the nineteenth century. A still more serious loss was occasioned by conditions which were too common in the industry of that day and were greatly fostered by the very specialization of the technologists. As soon as the industrial research worker lost touch with the framework of science in which he labored, as soon as he became unconcerned with the relationship of his effort to social progress, he forfeited the right of active responsibility in the broader human field. The early scientists had taken the spheres of thought and of action as their proper provinces. The new workers restricted themselves to the realm of impersonal and specialized thought. In time, the evasion of social responsibility

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so engendered was integrated to a deliberate code, and thus was born a pattern of thinking that has persisted and has been a definite handicap in the later evolution of science. By the end of the nineteenth century this attitude, coupled with a feeling of contempt for the non-specialist, was firmly established among a very large number of scientific workers.

It is not to be thought that the ideal of science as the abstract pursuit of knowledge was abandoned during this period. In academic and institutional laboratories, the world over, "pure" research was carried forward as never before, and tremendous stores of information were accumulated. But the influence of earning power is great. The ever-growing industries steadily sapped this reservoir of knowledge and at first paid far too little in return, since the seller hardly knew the value of his goods. Inevitably, the attitudes and modes of thought of industry came to influence the more cloistered thinking of the universities. More and more, the industrial way became the ideal of young academic scientists, and the ideals of specialization and of social irresponsibility entered academic strongholds, too. The newer scientific societies that sprang up were for the most part restricted professional organizations concerned with small parts of the vast front of research. Physics and chemistry were first affected by this trend, because they were especially subject to the economic pressures of industrial utility. But gradually mathematics, the biological sciences, and a host of sister fields were involved in the general movement. The class of highly specialized workers became firmly established — the expert in the theory of the complex variable, the sugar chemist, the economic entomologist, the metallurgist, the physical anthropologist. The cross links between these disciplines were few and tenuous, and there was little inclination to strengthen them.

Then, near the beginning of the new century, the tide slackened and almost imperceptibly a new trend set in, pointing to the coordination of scientific effort and the cooperation of research. A few geniuses of industry had the vision to see, and the courage to pronounce, that the greatest gains of industrial research would come through men whose scientific training was

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broad and fundamental in character rather than narrowly specialized, however perfectly the specialty was understood. The director of an American industrial research laboratory, the first of its kind in the nation, gave hitherto undreamed-of freedom in research to workers in his laboratory whose interests and abilities were adequate to their opportunities, and threatened to remove the doors of laboratory rooms if his workers refused to fraternize and to keep themselves familiar with the researches of their neighbors as their own progressed. Influential as great industry had become in the progress of science, this new attitude was a boon indeed and its results would ultimately have been widely felt. But before the trend had spread very far, the world was engulfed in war.

The First World War was a turning point in the development of scientific research. It differed markedly from all earlier struggles in that it involved whole nations of people, not merely their fighting fronts. Mobilization of science and of research workers in the common cause became an immediate necessity. Faced with this stern discipline, scientists showed themselves as ready and as able to cooperate intimately in their work as did any other group. The emergency, moreover, supplied the two elements that had been lacking so long in the environment of research. The problems that were presented — to produce a new weapon or to invent a new defense or to create a new medicine — demanded the most careful coordination of many disciplines. And all this coordinated effort was focused upon a very evident and a very vital and a very lofty human goal — the preservation of the way of life upon which scientists had depended and in which their profession had taken its very birth. Social irresponsibility was no longer necessary, nor even possible.

Scientific services were quickly devised to fill the needs of the day, and as the war progressed they took tangible organizational form. In England the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research was created in 1917 and ever since has played a significant role. Civilian chemical and physical and engineering laboratories took on a new and broader significance, and researchers emerged from their laboratories to become project managers, or

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officers of chemical warfare, or directors of technical development in the armed services. In our own country the National Research Council was set up in 1916 by President Wilson to widen the scope of war usefulness of the National Academy of Sciences, itself a product of the exigencies of the Civil War. Industrial and academic scientific teams assumed an importance that was entirely new. A vivid realization of the functional aspect of coordinated science in a modern state was forced by the momentous events of the time, and two critical years brought advances in thinking that in peace would have required decades.

These far-reaching changes were not likely to be reversed. With the war over, science, released from its immediate burdens, soared to new heights of activity, and the importance of "borderline" fields of research came to be increasingly appreciated. Private, academic, and industrial cooperative research organizations expanded apace in England and America during the first postwar years. The economic crises experienced by the capitalist countries after 1929 retarded the movement to some extent, but it was none the less pushed forward actively until the very eve of the Second World War.

In Russia a series of most interesting developments in cooperative research was taking place during the same years, and these largely escaped the effects of the world depression. A small amount of scientific effort, restricted by paucity of funds and by the isolation imposed by language barriers, had been characteristic of Czarist Russia since the time of Peter the Great. The situation was not greatly changed during the early days of the Soviets. As late as 1921 Pavlov was still hindered in his far-reaching physiological researches by freezing laboratory temperatures that killed his vivisected animals during delicate operations, and by such poverty that they could not be fed. But, with the inception of the First Five-Year Plan in 1927, a truly titanic drive was begun toward the organization and integration of cooperative research as a basic factor in the national life. For the first decade of this evolution it is questionable whether research in the U.S.S.R., for the most part, approached in quality that of the Western nations. It was naïve, unsophisticated, crude, and, often enough, in-

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accurate. But it was also blessedly free of the prejudices that had been rooted among Western workers and that the war had failed to dislodge.

The task was huge. Legions of scientists had to be trained, and well trained, by a minimal core of teachers. The physical framework for research organizations and institutes had to be established *de novo*. Because the country was geographically vast, work had to be undertaken on so wide a physical front that at first it progressed awkwardly. But the drive that builds great cities, creates great industries, raises great buildings to house scientific effort, recruits and trains and organizes stupendous scientific teams, will also produce powerful and comprehensive research results. Russia was truly on the threshold of these things when the Second World War came. Well before its inception, Russian institutes of research were gaining a justly earned fame throughout the world. The Physico-Technical Institutes of Leningrad, Kharkov, Dniepropetrovsk, and Sverdlovsk, and the Physical Institute of the University at Moscow were built up to very large proportions and served both as research centers and as training grounds for a veritable army of young physicists. Chemical centers — such as the Kharkov Institute of Physical Chemistry, the Institute of Chemical Physics at Leningrad, and the Institute of Physical Chemistry at Dniepropetrovsk — performed like functions in that field. Similar groups were established in biology and medicine, such as the Maxim Gorky Medico-Biological Research Institute at Moscow and the Institute of Experimental Biology there. Agricultural science was given the widest opportunities to develop, and engineering was similarly fostered. This was the first large-scale experiment in broadly organized state science. When Germany marched, it assessed its worth fully under the most difficult conditions.

In a certain sense the Second World War has repeated history, but on a vastly more comprehensive scale. This war, far beyond all earlier struggles of mankind, is a technical one, and science and cooperative research have taken the field in these years as never before. In England, the laboratories of industry, of the universities, and of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Re-

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search work in closest coordination with the armed services, and have played an important part in highly coordinated, intensive, directed effort. Within our own country, the National Research Council has played a more important part in this war than in the one for which it was created, and industrial and academic research laboratories have been busier than ever before. The newly organized Office of Scientific Research and Development, the governmental agency designed to coordinate the nation-wide research effort for military ends, has integrated the work of science on a scale that no other body has attempted in our national history. Both in England and in America, military research groups have attained new heights of achievement. We know the accomplishments of Russian war science now in less detail than we may hope to after the struggle, but there can be little doubt as to the heights that scientific coordination must have reached there.

Such is the historical backdrop that sets off the slow growth of cooperative research over the years. At the moment we are witnesses of the very pinnacle of its development throughout the world. For, in this war, the knowledge of every branch of science and the talents of every kind of scientist — astronomer, meteorologist, mathematician, psychologist, anthropologist, and entomologist, as well as physicist, chemist, and doctor — are all actively needed and must be integrated into the greatest fabric of organized research that mankind has yet devised. But this is regimented science. Patiently, effectively, and generally without complaint, scientists in this war as in the last have voluntarily subjected themselves to stern discipline, have learned the harsh rules of total warfare in every field of effort, have willingly laid aside that freedom of individual expression which is their greatest prize and normally their greatest asset.

Under the conditions of war, integration is most readily maintained. But what of the peacetime to come? On the whole, the outlook is good. Perhaps the most serious hazards in the time to come will be, again, the old psychological ones that have been with us so long and are not yet to be despised. There are still those

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who believe that the scientific worker who considers his *metier* in the framework of human evolution, who attempts to discern the end as well as the means as he proceeds, is necessarily a bad scientist. Two wars and the intervening peace have amply demonstrated the need for scientists to assume tacitly the really constructive part in the larger human fabric for which their tools now so well equip them. Also society has learned to welcome the leadership that science may properly take. But, if science is to assume such a role, its votaries must have far wider and more sympathetic vision than many now have, without losing their present acuity of perception and rigid accuracy of expression. This will constitute a severe professional challenge, but one that must be met.

Another psychological difficulty which still persists and is not to be ignored even in this day is, of course, the conviction that only by restricting himself entirely to one narrow and highly specialized field can the worker make a worthy contribution to his profession. This attitude is probably inherently harder to change, for it has established a number of secondary results that are far-reaching. It has produced the feeling that the only truly great scientific work is that which elicits new facts, which extends the boundaries of absolute knowledge. It is perfectly true that, with science as complex as it has grown today, one must indeed be a lifelong specialist in a very narrow area to contribute significantly to new knowledge in an old field. But a thought that has been too much neglected in the past is that facts, like any other sort of wealth, are subject to a law of supply and demand. In the days when we were poorly equipped with facts, their discovery may indeed have been the highest function of research. But facts alone, like piles of golden nuggets as they are taken from the ground, are of little good to anyone. They must be integrated and fabricated, at the scientific as well as the engineering level, and as the pile of nuggets accumulates the subsequent processing becomes just as important as the mining. The highest scientific tribute has properly been paid to those researchers who have illuminated large new areas of facts. But how few lofty awards have gone to those men who, solely by reviewing the status of a

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given branch of science, elicited important new relations entirely through the recombination of facts already recorded! We must learn to honor the brilliant synthesizer as much as we do the brilliant discoverer, for there is much to indicate that, in coming years, his research work may be of equal importance.

It seems clear that the successful scientist of the future must be at once an accomplished specialist and a brilliant generalist. Maintaining the thorough knowledge in his own branch for which he has been conspicuous in the past, he will need to cultivate familiarity with the broad front of scientific effort and the structure of contemporary human society. He must, on occasion, be a man of action — and of broad action — as well as a man of thought. This is a high challenge, and there will be few enough who can meet it. It is a high challenge to education, too, for the training required to produce such a mind must be very broad as well as very deep. Science training will also require much time, and we may hope that the economics of the future will allow a young research worker adequate time and opportunity for the broad educational training and preparatory experience that he will need. This has already been accomplished, at least in part, for those entering the medical profession, and increasing educational opportunity seems likely to be offered in other lines, especially in industry.

These are the liabilities in the picture. What are some of its assets? The first and most powerful asset is the change in the very structure of science that the years of intellectual and institutional cooperation have brought about. It has been proved beyond a doubt, and is now being appreciated on an ever-widening scale, that some of the very richest territory for future scientific research lies along those borders of deep, but narrow, disciplines that have so far been relatively little explored. Some of the most productive researches of modern times have been prosecuted along such borderlines. The whole science of chemotherapy, heralded by Ehrlich's epoch-making discovery in 1891 that the malarial organism is stained by methylene blue, has been reared on the most intimate synthesis of chemical, physiological, and bacteriological research. Step by step it has advanced through

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this synthesis. The discovery of salvarsan and the understanding of its specific action, the synthesis and use of the organic antimonials, "Bayer 205" with its power to cure sleeping sickness, the antimalarials plasmoquine and atabrin, and the azo dye prontosil have all been markers on the road. That road has led to the latest triumph of sulfanilamide and the expansion of our chemotherapeutic knowledge to include other sulfa compounds, and research is actively pushing beyond this boundary today. The border sciences of biochemistry and biophysics have widened our working knowledge of anaesthesia and have contributed radically new anaesthetics to the working kit of the surgeon. Vitamin analysis and vitamin synthesis, by chemical processes or by radiation, have markedly changed the entire nutritional picture in but a few years. Bacteriology, joining hands with chemistry, has provided new means for the synthesis of rare chemicals, has expanded our understanding of bacterial products in general, and has given the world penicillin as its newest concrete contribution. Synthesis of research concepts in such widely separated areas as genetics, embryology, morphology, and biochemistry are bringing to biological science some of its greatest advances of the century.

Studies of the physics of high pressures in combination with the mechanism of certain chemical reactions have produced artificial diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. Integration of the principles of seismology and of gravity measurement with geological knowledge has made possible modern methods of oil and mineral prospecting, on the one hand, and has given us a new concept of climatology and organic evolution on the other. Mathematics has brought a wholly new day to astronomical research and, in relatively elementary form, is revolutionizing biological concepts. Matrix mechanics, developed as an abstruse mathematical art in another century, has proved a working tool wherewith to revolutionize modern physical thought. And so the list might be extended endlessly. With these triumphs to its credit, it is very unlikely that cooperative research will cease to drive forward in the postwar years.

A further potential asset in the picture, on the organizational side, will be the increasingly intimate cooperation that is likely to

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develop in the future between industrial and academic research. We have seen that this relationship, originally a competitive one, was becoming much more cooperative before the war. The mechanisms whereby this sort of dualistic education can be made available to the student research scientist, however, were relatively crude and must be developed greatly in the future. This cooperation had gone much further in the Soviet Union before the war, where industrial scientists did some teaching and academic research workers undertook practical problems. We in the West can profitably follow this practice much further than we have.

It was no accident, but the keenest of vision, that inspired Nathaniel Hawthorne to put into the mouth of Clifford Pyncheon the sentiment that human evolution may take the form of an ascending spiral curve. Science in its infancy was perforce broad, its research was necessarily cooperative, its great workers were Titans whose efforts have made themselves felt in every branch of technical endeavor. Only in the following period, when the details of science expanded so rapidly, did it lose internal coherence. Now the time has come when coherence must be regained on a far wider scale, when integration must be achieved, and thoroughgoing cooperation established throughout the mighty structure of modern research. Increasingly, the organizational unit of fundamental research must be the working team of differing specialists, each highly expert in his own line yet acutely conscious of the relation of his work to that of his fellows. These must not be teams coordinated only at the managerial level, like those of the old chemical industry, but intimately linked in knowledge and emotion, work and purpose, at the level of the actual worker, which for science is the only significant level.

This is a high and a challenging ideal toward which to strive in cooperative research. It will demand our utmost efforts and will require the full talents of our most endowed workers to achieve it, but the rewards of success in the coming peace may well be too great even to estimate today.

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The Faith of the Scholar

Norman Foerster

I

MOST Americans would agree that the present war is not just a war of physical force against physical force, of machines against machines, a war of oil and minerals and food. They would probably agree that it is rather, in a much deeper sense, a war of men against men, of mind against mind, of will against will, of humanity against inhumanity, of civilization against barbarism. In a word, they would agree that it is a war of human values, the values we believe in versus the values the enemy believes in.

But suppose they were asked, what *are* these values that we believe in? I am afraid they would answer hastily without thinking, or think silently for an embarrassingly long time.

What are the values we Americans believe in, and do we really believe in them? Do we know what we want the future to contain for us, and do we really want it? Have we made our choice, and are we willing to work to earn it?

If we can't answer clearly and firmly, we need not be surprised. Our leaders cannot answer either. No official spokesman, including the President of the United States and the more vocal Vice-President, has succeeded in giving a convincing and energizing answer. The most famous answer we have, the Four Freedoms, is merely negative. It does not tell us what we want, it merely tells us what we don't want. We don't want religious intolerance, controlled opinion, fear, and want. It is freedom *from*, not freedom *for*. The only people who seem to know what we want are those who propose to dedicate the future to the sale and enjoyment of kitchen gadgets, television, and family airplanes.

Now those who are peculiarly responsible for an answer to the question, What are the best, the most deeply satisfying values, are thoughtful people concerned with the humanities: historians,

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men of letters and art, philosophers, religious persons. It is their business to help us decide the ends of living. The means of living we need too, and hence we need, and need equally, the help of natural scientists and social scientists. The scientists have been immensely active in showing how man may control nature, and in analyzing the processes of social and political ways of living. But the service of scientists in providing means toward the good life has been largely frustrated by the prevailing vagueness as to the ends. In colloquial language, we are all dressed up and nowhere to go. Facing the need of decision, we are groping, bewildered.

This is why today we need, above all, the aid of thoughtful people in the humanities. In the opinion of Raymond B. Fosdick, president of the Rockefeller Foundation, our hope in the future that looks so dark depends most of all upon "the historians, the philosophers, the artists, the poets, the novelists, the dramatists — all those who fashion ideas, concepts, and forms that give meaning and value to life and furnish patterns of conduct. It is they," he ventures to add, "who really construct the world we live in, and it is they who with sensitive awareness to human perplexity and aspiration and with the power of imaginative presentation can speak effectively to a distracted world."

Mr. Fosdick means, I take it, that this is what the men of the humanities *should* do for us in the future, rather than what they *can* do for us now. It is my own view, at all events, that the men in my own area of letters — the poets, novelists, dramatists, together with their scholarly counterparts in the universities — have in general quite failed to recognize their obligation and are actually of slight public importance. So far, they have failed us, as they failed us after the last war. After the last war, which was called a war of democracy against autocracy, their most obvious obligation was to give form and vital meaning to the *faith* of democracy, to deepen the significance of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." They did not do it, or even try to. They doubted everything, they were happy in muckraking, they sneered at great names and all human excellence, they found life sordid and futile and made it more so in imaginative presentation. They themselves were largely the cause of the skepticism and

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cynicism of the decadent period that prepared the way for World War II. They were the Americans against whom Archibald MacLeish, in the spring of 1940 while we shuddered at the collapse of France, leveled his eloquent and indignant charge of being "The Irresponsibles" — both the writers outside the universities and the cloistered scholars within the universities. In the intellectual and spiritual reconstruction when peace comes, are they going to fail us again? The public is serious, and looking for leadership. A public that is reading the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's* as never before in the history of these magazines is willing to listen and to learn. What are our literary scholars ready to offer?

II

In the field of language, they possess important tools — not ends, to be sure, but useful means. One of these is linguistics, the science of language underlying all languages. Language is the greatest discovery that man has ever made, but only within the past hundred years or so has it become the subject of thorough study. Of the various branches of linguistics, the most directly valuable today is semantics, the study of changes in the meaning of words. Its importance in an age of propaganda is obvious.

Another resource of American learning is a knowledge of modern foreign languages, the need of which has been brought home to us by the war and by the prospect of closer relations with many countries after the war. German, French, Spanish, and Italian have long been standard languages with us; Russian is being added, and Chinese may be added next. In the so-called intensive method we are learning how these languages may be learned in a short time. We are also coming to recognize that a relative mastery of a language, instead of a smattering acquaintance, is essential for the great public purpose in view, namely, a key to foreign civilizations, unlocking the minds, emotions, and attitudes of the alien peoples whom we must learn to understand, whether we conceive of them as friends or potential enemies. Hereafter it should be the obligation of every scholarly mind to learn at least one foreign language well, not only for its high personal values but also, and more especially, for its social values.

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Again, in the field of language, we possess, though not widely, a knowledge of ancient Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the tongues of our spiritual and intellectual constitution, since the basic values of our civilization are Biblical and classical. All that we prize most in life, all that renders man splendid despite the shame of persistent war, oppression, and a general beastliness, goes back in history to the religion, philosophy, art, science, and even the aspiration of democracy, of either Judea or Greece, to which we may add the Roman sense of law and order. It is an interesting symbolic fact that the two American presidents who did most to make the faith of American civilization clear and moving were, one of them, profoundly Classical, and the other profoundly Christian: Thomas Jefferson, whose tastes, ethics, and philosophy were Classical, who read the Greek and Roman authors to the end of his life in the original languages, and who said, "I thank on my knees him who directed my early education for having put into my possession this rich source of delight; and I would not exchange it for anything which I could then have acquired, and have not since acquired"; and, secondly, Abraham Lincoln, who knew few books but knew the *Bible*, reading, as one biographer puts it, "like one who desires the weapon of learning for practical ends, and desires also to have patterns of what life should be," who was unconcerned with formal creeds but who learned to feel and speak like the authors of the *Bible* and the *Book of Common Prayer* — our foremost Christian president. Greatness comes of greatness. It would be a tragedy indeed if, in the new era after the war, we cared only for the little novelties of the hour and ignored the wisdom of the ages. The ancient languages, which are the key to a full understanding of this wisdom, are even more important for us than the modern languages.

Potentially, then, our resources in the field of language are adequate. We have the tools and need but use them.

I turn now to the field of literature, where the situation is very different. Here we are far from ready. Granted that our literary scholars have labored and produced tirelessly, the fact remains that the fruits of their labor are only slightly and indirectly of public concern, have little to offer toward the reconstruction of

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values. With few exceptions the scholarly mind in America has been cloistered and fugitive, aloof from the conflict of ideas, unrelated to the deepest issues of our times. The vast majority of our scholars have been preoccupied with historical research, tracing the development of literature and the relation of literature to its environment. They have been interested in the sources a writer used, in the story of his apprenticeship and maturity, in his influence upon his age and later ages. They have been interested in the past as such, the pastness of the past, not its meaning and value for the present and the future. Reconstruction to them means the reconstruction of the past, not the reconstruction when peace comes. They ignore the choices before us because they wish to be neutral in the manner of science. They are servants of science, not servants of the public. In a remote and indirect way some of their learning is socially usable, but instead of using it they prefer to accumulate more of it, leaving the process of use to what they deem to be unscholarly minds.

A smaller group of our scholars have been preoccupied with purely aesthetic interests, the analysis of poetic technique. They speak much of "poetry as poetry," by which they mean not what you and I mean, but merely a harmonious relationship of the elements that enter into a particular poem, such as rhythm, images, diction, statement, tone, attitude, best exemplified perhaps by a poem of John Donne or T. S. Eliot. A few members of this group proceed from aesthetic analysis to aesthetic creation; they write poems addressed, if not merely to themselves, to the few other persons who are aesthetic specialists. Of the group as a whole it must be said, as has been said of the literary historians, that in a remote and indirect way some of their learning is socially useful, but that, instead of using it for social ends they prefer to accumulate more of it. While the literary historians are servants of science, the aestheticists are servants of art, of art conceived very narrowly. In no obvious and important sense can they be called servants of the public.

If there is substantial truth in what I have been saying, it follows that American learning in the area of literature has little to offer toward the postwar reconstruction of values. I must conse-

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quently ask now, What *should* it offer? What should it contribute as soon as it can make itself ready?

III

Historical research and technical analysis are not enough — the scholar must press on to the critical interpretation of literature as an affirmation of human values. He must remember that the vast majority of poets, dramatists, and novelists are never content with being merely symptoms of their age or skilled craftsmen. They have something to say about human life which they think is true and important, and it is the business of the scholar to judge whether their communication is really true and important. Every reader of imaginative literature does this; it is for the scholar to do it expertly. If he cannot read and judge books more intelligently and soundly than the casual reader, his scholarship is of scant consequence. His long training and experience are relatively sterile if he cannot judge, better than other people, whether an author's claim to wisdom, to illumination of the values of living, is justified.

Now, in order to judge, the scholar needs standards of value, which he may derive from literature itself, from the other humanities, indeed from all that he knows about human life and from his own personal experience in the turmoil of actual living. If the skeptic says to him, "How can you erect absolutes, how can you find standards which are not merely your own preferences?" he is ready with the retort, "How can you refuse to try, how can you be satisfied with the worst of all absolutes, absolute relativity?" The scholar as critic will not assert that his standards are to be thought of as rigid and final; whatever the evidence in favor of them, he is aware that they involve some degree of uncertainty, like the hypotheses of science. In trying to set up valid standards he will therefore seek to find the mean between an absolute dogmatism and an absolute relativity, which is a vastly harder task than rushing to either extreme.

Since the scholar cannot assume that the best literature is, like the best science, the latest, he must find his main material of study in the achievements of older times, even ancient times.

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The science of ancient Greece counts for little today, while Homer is not part of a dead past but fully alive. There is no clearer example of a dead book than yesterday's best seller that nobody cares to read. It is obvious that an essential part of the scholar's public responsibility consists in keeping Homer and all the truly great writers available as sources of wisdom, to keep current the best that has been thought and said.

He must also seek to interpret and judge contemporary literature, which, as it develops, will modify and refine, however slightly, his standards of literary excellence. The public should no longer be forced to look to him in vain for guidance in understanding and judging the books that stream from the press. There is no reason why this social function should be left to the inexpert — hard-pressed, chattering reviewers and cocksure journalists who think they are profound when they are merely ignorant.

And beyond the present, the scholar should be concerned with the future. He should try to determine what is sound and what unsound in the programs of the Symbolist writers, the Marxian writers, the regionalists, and all the other groups seeking a place in the sun. He should inquire what new or old and forgotten qualities, aesthetic and ethical, might correct or advance what is being written.

And finally, a few of our literary scholars, not all of them, should be expected to move on to general criticism, a criticism of our total modern culture, bringing literature into relation with politics, morals, religion, and other social interests, as was done by men like Carlyle, Emerson, and Irving Babbitt.

In carrying out his public function, the scholar may choose among a wide variety of media according to his talent. Access to the public is now offered by the daily press, periodicals, books, lectures, conferences, study clubs, the radio, motion pictures, television, regional and national organizations. He has scant excuse for remaining cloistered and indifferent.

IV

I have been speaking mainly of the professional scholar, but the layman also has his public duty. There are scholarly minds

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outside institutions of learning, for the most part graduates of institutions of learning. It is the obligation of the more intelligent people of America to do far more serious thinking about the problem of values, about the reorientation of aims of living which appears to be necessary if modern civilization is to survive.

What does this involve in the area of literature? It means for one thing, the recognition that literature is not mere entertainment, a way of killing time, but rather a way of using time. It means the recognition also that literature is not merely a means of aesthetic appreciation, an exercise of the emotions that is possibly conducive to psychological health, but something vastly more important: a means of attaining understanding of life and wisdom in actual living. This was clear to the lawyer whom I have quoted, Raymond B. Fosdick, when he said that, along with the other humanities, literature constructs the world we live in. What does this mean? Of course we live in another world, too, the material universe and the things we fashion from natural resources, the fields of wheat and corn, the bridges, the buildings, the tables and chairs, the thousand and one gadgets; and this is, above all for Americans, a fascinating world. But in saying it is fascinating I have already turned from the world of things to the other world, the world of values. This is truly the world we live in, this deeper, this human world of hope, of worry, of humor, of hatred, of envy, of friendship and love, of contemplation and reverence, of all attitudes and motives good and bad. This is the world we must learn to understand, to relate ourselves to, to find our happiness in if we are to find it at all. This is the human world of conduct, of preference of one good to another, of that exertion of choice and aim which is with us in almost every waking moment. Some area of necessity reduces this freedom, most of all in a totalitarian or slave society, but in the main the great question of life is, insistently, what will I do next? To keep this question freely open has been a prime object of American democracy ever since we affirmed our right to the pursuit of happiness.

This is the world we live in, and it is constructed, shaped, tenanted, by means of the imagination, and thus imagination, as Napoleon declared, rules the world. The vigor of Napoleon's own

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unethical imagination is itself testimony of the truth of the assertion. The disastrous effects of Napoleon's imagination, and still more that of Hitler, is ample evidence that the imagination, which sets up objects of desire, should be disciplined and directed toward objects that make for personal and social happiness. And this is the task for which literature and the other humanities are peculiarly responsible, and which they have failed to discharge in twentieth-century America.

Americans, from churchmen to gangsters, want the more abundant life, but prevailingly have had a highly vague and inadequate notion of what the more abundant life is. A good-natured and optimistic people, they have, to be sure, enjoyed life. But they have missed much. While they have created an external civilization which is the most remarkable in all history, they have failed to make use of it — it revolves in a great void. Ever expanding and accumulating the instruments of living, they have forgotten to live. In the comparative security of the nineteenth century, their aimlessness was safe enough; they were free to settle and make over a continent undisturbed. They cannot expect to be undisturbed hereafter, and they will not be safe till they have set in order their house of the inner life, established a sounder set of values, integrated themselves in a new faith in life.

To work to this end, I say, is the obligation of all Americans, and above all of those gifted with more than average intelligence and educational opportunities. It is time for such persons to question our values, not cynically but earnestly, and to seek aid wherever they may find it, whether in religion, or philosophy, or the arts, or literature. To literature they have easy access: the best imagination of the past and present is open to all who have really learned to read. In the last war educated German soldiers carried in their knapsacks the works of Goethe; today, Stalin reads Goethe and Shakespeare. Can educated Americans afford to do less? Let them read, as the saying goes, with a purpose, a sufficiently good purpose, and they will not only enhance their own sense of life but, in conversation with friends, in all their activities, do their part toward forming that enlightened public opinion upon which the fate of democracy depends.

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It is time for all thoughtful Americans to contribute what they can toward the formation of a faith. As one of our most earnest dramatists, Maxwell Anderson, has put it:

> Without a core of belief neither man nor nation has courage to go on. . . . We must have a personal, a national, and a racial faith, or we are dry bones in a death valley. . . . Mere rationalism is mere death. Mere scientific advance without purpose is an advance toward the waterless mirage. . . . The national conscience is the sum of personal conscience, the national culture the sum of personal culture — and the lack of conscience is an invitation to destruction, the lack of culture an assurance that we shall not even be remembered.

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Weighing the Earth

Paul R. Heyl

HAVE you ever wondered, when you have seen men digging the cellar of a building and taking away the earth a ton at a time, how many tons there might be in the whole earth? Scientific men are the greatest wonderers to be found anywhere, and they have not only asked themselves this question (there was no one else to ask) but they have devised experiments to give the answer. It is, of course, a very large figure — about six thousand million million million tons; six followed by twenty-one ciphers. The number is really known a little more accurately than that; the first three figures are known, if any one should need them.

But why should any one need to know this number? Of what possible use can it be to anybody? There are two answers to this question.

In the first place, a knowledge of the mass of the earth is of interest to astronomers, for it is a starting point from which can be obtained the masses of the moon, of the sun, and of the other planets of our solar system. Our earth, therefore, is a natural standard of reference with which other quantities are compared. In the second place, a knowledge of the earth's mass enables us to learn something about the interior of the earth — that region about which so much imaginative literature has been written, and which no one can ever hope to investigate directly. From the earth's mass we can calculate its density, that is, the number of times it is heavier than an equal globe of water. And this leads us to a rather remarkable conclusion.

The various rock materials which make up the outer crust of the earth, and which are accessible to test and measure, have an average density of about three times that of water, while the figure for the density of the earth as a whole comes out nearly twice this value, or about 5.5. The inference is obvious: the core of the

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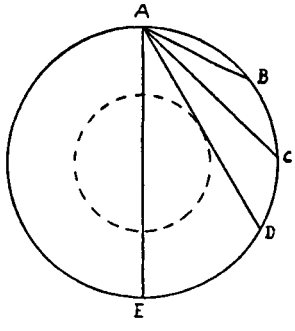
earth must be composed of something much heavier than the outer layers. If the outer layers of the earth — constituting, say, half its entire volume — have a density of three, then the core, constituting the other half, must have a density of eight to give an average of 5.5. This is a figure considerably greater than that of rock materials and suggests a metallic core. What can it be?

For this question, too, it is possible to find an answer. Several independent lines of evidence have led those who have given most attention to the subject to the strange conclusion that the core of the earth is a great ball of iron! One of these lines of evidence arises from a study of earthquake waves. When an earthquake occurs at any point it sets the earth's crust into vibration, and waves are transmitted in all directions. At many scientific centers there are seismometers, instruments that automatically record the time of arrival of such waves. Knowing the time and place at which the earthquake occurred, we can calculate the speed of travel of these earthquake waves.



Referring to this figure, suppose an earthquake occurs at A, and that the resulting waves are recorded at B, C, D and E. It is found that the speed of travel along AC is greater than that along AB. The path AC goes through a deeper region of greater pressure, and this alters the mechanical properties of the rock. This increase in speed continues up to a certain path — AD — beyond which the speed falls off suddenly. This indicates a spherical core in the earth with a rather sharply defined boundary, the core material being much greater in density than the adjacent portions of the surrounding shell. The diameter of this core appears to be a little over half the diameter of the earth.

But such observations tell us nothing about the composition of this core. What reason is there to believe that it is composed of iron? Are there not other metals equally as heavy or heavier? For this question astronomy has an answer.

It is now generally thought that all the planets of our solar

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system were at one time a part of the sun. The spectroscope tells us that the solar atmosphere contains practically all the elements known to exist in the earth. Iron in a gaseous state is abundant in the atmosphere of the sun, and the various constituents of our rocks are also to be found there. The formation of our solar system seems to have been caused by the chance passage of another star near our sun, millions of years ago. At their closest approach each sun, by gravitative action, raised a great tidal wave in the other. The wave in our sun reached such a height that it eventually snapped loose and broke up into fragments, large and small.

The visiting sun passed on his endless way. The pull of gravitation subsided and our sun resumed his normal shape; but the fragments circled round him, gradually condensing into aggregates here and there until finally our solar system resulted, still bearing traces of its origin in the asteroids and in the rings of Saturn. In the process of formation of the earth the heavier metallic particles would naturally go to the center and the lighter materials to the outer layers. But, still, how do we know that the heavier particles were iron?

This process of growth of the earth by accretion is not yet over. Occasionally bodies called meteorites fall to the earth. Some of these are of a stony composition, while others are composed of metallic iron alloyed with a little nickel. These strange bodies seem to be circling about our sun, and occasionally one of them comes near enough to the earth to be drawn in by its attraction. It is probable that these meteorites are chips left over, or unused portions of material dating back to the birth of our solar system. So much comes out of an apparently dry and abstruse determination of the mass of the earth!

How is the earth weighed? Like many other scientific measurements, this operation is carried out by an indirect process. It is obvious that the more massive the earth the more strongly it will attract bodies at its surface, and it is upon this fact that the method is based.

Newton was the first to establish the formula for the attraction between two bodies, and while he did not himself apply this formula to the calculation of the earth's mass he made a guess at

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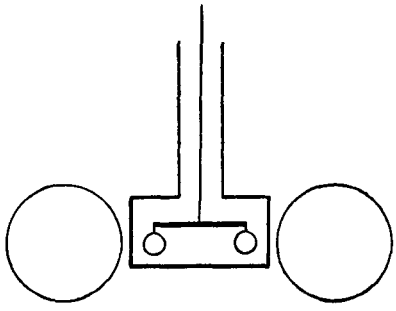
the average density of the earth which turned out to be particularly lucky. Newton had observed that (at least in a few English mines) the heavier minerals were found at the greater depths, and on this rather slender basis he ventured the guess that although the average density of the surface rocks was about three, the density of the whole earth might be "five or six times that of water." Newton guessed better than he knew, for the experimental figure for the mean density of the earth is 5.5.

Newton's formula for the gravitative attraction between the earth and a small body on its surface requires us to know several things: the mass of the small body, its distance from the center of the earth, and the force with which the earth attracts it. These quantities are all measurable to a high degree of precision; but, in addition, the formula contains a numerical multiplying factor, called the constant of gravitation, which has to be determined by measuring the attraction between two bodies of a size that can be handled in the laboratory. Upon the measurement of this constant much experimental work has been done since Newton's day. This is the difficult part of weighing the earth. Gravitation is really a very small force, though it may not seem so to some of us when we have to climb a long flight of stairs; but this is only because the earth is so very large and massive. Two persons weighing 150 pounds each, standing side by side, would experience a gravitational attraction toward each other of only a few millionths of an ounce; and, with such bodies as can be handled with precision in the laboratory, the force is so small as to require a very sensitive instrument to measure it. The best instrument for this purpose is a torsion balance, depicted below.



A light rod of aluminum about eight inches long is hung by a very fine filament of tungsten at its center. This filament is such as is used in electric lamps. The rod hangs in a horizontal position and carries at each end a small metallic ball of some heavy metal, such as gold or platinum. The rod swings

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very slowly back and forth in a small arc, with a time of swing of perhaps half an hour. So delicate is this arrangement that a very small force applied to the balls will perceptibly alter its time of swing. The presence of a person within ten feet of it will have this effect; or if a car is driven up and parked outside the laboratory the torsion pendulum will indicate its presence. In some experiments at the National Bureau of Standards, to avoid disturbances of this nature, the apparatus was set up in a room thirty-five feet underground, where all moving masses were overhead and had no effect on the horizontal swings of the pendulum.

The swinging system is enclosed in a case from which the air is exhausted. This eliminates trouble from air currents that might disturb the swing, and also, by removing the resistance of the air, allows the pendulum to swing for many hours before coming to rest. Outside the case two large steel masses are placed, at first as close as possible to the balls inside. The case is no hindrance to their attraction for the balls, for, so far as is known, every material is perfectly transparent to gravitation. In this position the time of swing of the torsion pendulum is measured. The large masses are now moved as far away as possible from the balls, and the time of swing again measured. It may now be as much as five minutes greater. From observations such as these, combined with measurements of the distances between balls and large masses, the actual force of attraction can be calculated.

Measurements of this kind were first made in 1798 by Henry Cavendish in England and have been repeated by others a number of times since, with results of increasing precision as the technique of laboratory practice has gradually been perfected. The most recent measurements were conducted at the National Bureau of Standards by the writer of the present article, and published in two articles in the N. B. S. *Journal of Research* in 1930 and 1942. The precision of the result published in 1930 was about one part in 1,300. While this was more accurate than all previously obtained values, it was thought possible, by certain improvements in the method, to obtain a result correct to the scientist's perpetual goal — "one more decimal place." A carefully planned and executed attempt to attain this result met with but

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slight success, the precision of the 1942 result being about one part in 2,200. The conclusion may be drawn that the limit of the possibilities of the torsion balance have been reached and that the next worker on this subject will have to use a radically different method. In the closing years of the last century some work of this nature was carried out and has so much human interest that it may be told here profitably.

As has often happened in scientific research, two men worked on this experiment at the same time without knowing of each other's investigations. One of them was a British scientist, Sir C. V. Boys, who worked with the best facilities that London and Oxford University could furnish him. He spent several years at the task and obtained what was believed to be the most accurate result up to that time. While he was doing this, another man, of whom Professor Boys had never heard, was working at the same problem far away in Bohemia. This man was Dr. Karl Braun, who had been a teacher of physics all his life. At an advanced age he retired from teaching and was sent to a monastery in the mountains of Bohemia to end his days peacefully and quietly. But Dr. Braun could not content himself in inactivity. For something to do he set up an apparatus in his cell in the monastery and determined the weight of the earth. His findings were almost exactly those obtained by Professor Boys. Much of Dr. Braun's apparatus was made by himself. It is noteworthy that he was the first person to use with success a vacuum about his torsion pendulum. Professor Boys, in his published paper, said that he believed the use of a high vacuum to be impracticable. Professor Boys could hardly credit Dr. Braun's achievement, and made the long trip to Bohemia to see him. He found Dr. Braun, at that time over eighty years old, planning a repetition of his work to eliminate some errors that he had recognized. Unfortunately, he did not live to do this.

Nothing, it would seem, is too large or too small for men to attempt to weigh and measure. In the experiment that I have just described to you, both extremes are to be found. The enormous mass of the earth is determined by measuring a force so

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small that only the most delicate pendulum known will detect it.

The enormous distances from the earth to the sun or to the stars do not appall the mind of man; neither do the inconceivably minute quantities involved in the study of the structure of atoms. Anything that exists is a fit object for study, no matter how large, no matter how small. Man may be but the merest speck in the universe, yet in his intelligent comprehension of it he is but little lower than the angels.

It is said that at one time an astronomer discovered a new star, which appeared to be approaching the earth with a great velocity. Night after night he studied it, finally becoming convinced that it was destined to strike the earth. He calculated that this would happen in a few years. Night after night he watched this approaching doom, fascinated by it. He did not announce his discovery, fearing to witness the orgy of lawlessness and despair into which it might plunge the world; but one night he spoke aloud and addressed the star as follows: "I know that you will soon destroy me and all things living; but I can calculate the day, nay, even the hour when this will happen; and you are but a blind, brute thing, and I would not change places with you!"

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FROM THE WORKSHOP

Our Unknown Enemy

D. H. M. Ensign, U.S.N.R.[1]

TODAY all of us must learn things we never dreamed of before Poland or Pearl Harbor. But there is little time for public education outside the mechanistic aspects of war; little time to catch up on the one big question mark in all America — Japan. Japan and her people are still, after two years of war, our unknown enemy.

How much do you know about Japan? Have you ever met a Japanese; ever talked with one? Fewer than one per cent of us, probably, can answer "yes" to that query. Few Japanese have ventured inland from California, where most of the Japanese-Americans lived apart from their fellow Americans.

Our information on Japan has come mainly from comic strips, radio serials, and movies. The popular view of Japan so formed is dangerously full of misconceptions that handicap us on the field and will cripple us even more after victory. The comic-strip attitude, a one-dimension view of the Japanese as bestial, sub-human enigmas, creates a destructive ignorance of our true enemy. In wartime, we should know what our enemy is thinking and why, so we can outwit him. In the postwar years, we must know him to rehabilitate him as an adult member of the new family of nations. From every angle, we have everything to gain by knowing some main principles about Japan.

The military has long since recognized this need and it is from the special Navy School for Language Officers that we draw our principles here. This school, high in the Colorado Rockies, trains its men through Japanese movies, language textbooks, and expert Japanese-American instructors under Naval supervision. Let us draw aside the curtain of language that has been our main barrier against a knowledge of Japan and, with these training materials and fourteen months' personal study as guideposts, chart a few main principles.

Japan in celluloid is a fascinating picture of a nation where ancient custom and modern invention mingle in, at times, rather bizarre scenes. The Japanese films themselves are technically far below Hollywood standards in photography, acting, and directing. But different standards apply, only to be expected in comparing any foreign culture with our own. One amusing sidelight is the completely illogical way scenes are shifted

[1] The views expressed in this article are the private ones of the author and should not be construed as official or reflecting the views of the Navy Department or the Naval Service at large. Anonymity is required by Naval regulations.

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without sequence. A bit of flowing stream, fleecy cloud, or birds twittering around flowers may be interposed at the oddest points in the story. Sometimes they have remote psychological allusions, but usually amaze the audience, which must also accustom itself to swift changes in scene due to lack of fade-in interludes and other Hollywood polishing devices.

The historical films, exciting in their action shots, show us how modern Japan emerged only eighty years ago in the civil wars — the heyday of the samurai, whose code of bravery has been much publicized. The fact that this feudal period is so recent in Japanese history explains why Japan's sudden westernization remains only surface deep, and her maturity as a power is not yet achieved. The stylized battle scenes show that courage is taken for granted but that human frailties and weaknesses are common too. The Japanese soldier is tough and fights "religiously" for his state lord, but this does not mean he lacks spiritual devotion.

Some of the films, such as one produced by a mining company to prevent miners from deserting their work, describe life in Japan's work-a-day world. Workers apparently regard loyalty to their jobs and employers as a sort of public service. All is modern efficiency in the city stock market, factory, or shop. Even the most modern cities, however, still have their crowded, oriental living sections. And the farm scenes, especially, show that primitive folkways still govern many lives. The middle-class Japanese, though, has adopted Western clothes and customs, and the cities where he works and lives are outwardly Westernized. Inside his own home, however, he may change into the freer Japanese clothes and usually sleeps, eats and conducts social affairs in the old manner.

The underlying principle of these social mores is the old stratified society, with all the humility and obedience rules firmly imbedded. We know the Japanese are polite to a fault, with their bows and honorific gradations of address to different social classes. Actually, the movies show that this is simply a cluster of folkways grown into social custom. Obedience to age and parents is similar to Chinese, and age and wisdom form the magnet of honor.

It has been said that there is no family unity in Japan; that the morals of family life are low. The movies — designed, remember, for Japanese consumption — contradict this charge. Morals and ethics are ingrained in the Shinto way of conduct that reaches into most homes. True, many of the formal observances are mere form such as we often see in American religion, but the practical force they exert seems to be strong.

Japanese comedies and musicals show definite Hollywood earmarks. One of them reminded me of the Charlie Chaplin farces: fast-moving and slapstick. Indeed, the Japanese have been called "a happy race," and the films bear this out. However, the lack of sophisticated comedy shows that most Japanese cannot comprehend the more delicate touches of humor in which the French are so

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expert. Plain, obvious slapstick seems to be their main dish in humor.

Emotions in love stories are very subdued, since the Japanese consider that the open betrayal of affection is vulgar. There are no kisses between hero and heroine and Japanese Gables and Taylors must win their fair maids with formality. This leads us to the low status of Japanese women. Most of the women accept this humility and are content to rule "behind the throne," but since Japanese women have entered the professions they have begun to argue, like their American sisters, for greater rights. However, they are still usually "seen and not heard."

Now, turning to a consideration of Japanese language textbooks, we find that the Naganuma graded series used by the Navy is the only standard door to mastery of Japanese. The fables and anecdotes used in the books are usually similar to European fairy tales, but instead of our dragon-killing tradition, the Japanese have the famous "Momo taro" and "Urashima taro" which illustrate a non-violent, forgiveness tradition, in which the hero often forgives the dragons, or ends on a philosophic note. Many of the fables came from the mainland, along with most of the adopted Chinese culture, and so have an oriental, Indian-Chinese flavor.

Japanese writers, in comparing Western life with Japanese life and in describing their philosophy, appear to condemn Western materialism, claiming, for example, that Japan uses "no keys." They stress a practical, rather pragmatic philosophy and eulogize sages who keep their feet on the ground, which in itself betrays a limited understanding of abstract ideas and a dislike of sophistry in any shape.

The language itself gives us two characteristics of the people who speak it: social hierarchy and national immaturity. The first is reflected in the many honorific and humble words used in different circumstances, which have grown into a whole system of speech almost unknown in other tongues. The second is seen in the many archaic forms and conflicting usages of Japanese, for the language is not yet standardized and remains a mass of idiomatic phrases.

Finally, how do our school's Japanese-American teachers give us an insight into our enemy? Just to meet and know a person of Japanese ancestry is to recognize the human qualities of the race. Of course, these instructors are of high calibre and loyally American, but their characteristics reflect Japan's nationals as well. They are intelligent, especially in factual curiosity; industrious, seemingly without tiring point; pleasant, with a sense of humor that seldom takes life and its tragedies or annoyances very seriously; rather stubborn, with a fixed mind that hates to give up an opinion or idea; and finally, close-mouthed, which may explain the occidental questioning of their sincerity. True to their distaste for displaying emotion, they dislike to praise or blame or criticize, especially to Westerners. Whether this comes from a subconscious inferiority complex toward the powerful West or simply is an extension of their politeness tradition, or a

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mixture of both, is another question.

These characteristics and principles of Japan and her people only scratch the surface of what all intelligent Americans must learn now for today's war and tomorrow's peace. Know your enemy: facts are weapons in modern warfare. If we can chart his mind and culture, we can meet him on common ground, for he already is well-educated in our habits and customs.

Knowing one's enemy also provides a weapon for positive action. The building of a better Japan in a better world is certainly a more worthy goal to fight for than her negative destruction. The soldier and the citizen who want to break Japan's military yoke in order to bring her people into the paths of peace and maturity, have a healthy, inspiring, and Christian goal.

And, beyond this, we must know the facts about our darkest enemy if we are to build the One World for which we claim this war is fought. That unified world will require greater international education and require each citizen to understand his fellow men in every corner of the globe. Now, today, in the dust of battle when knowledge of Japan and the Japanese is also a vital military necessity, is the time to educate ourselves. Here is a challenge to every would-be world citizen: How will you answer it? Our military victory and our hope for the future peace of the Pacific and the world await that answer.

Oliver Wendell Holmes Still the Poet Laureate at Eighty-Four

Miriam Rossiter Small

ELLEN TERRY
Sur la scène
Toujours la Reine;
Sans diademe
Encore la même.
Hommage de l'Auteur.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES
Boston, Jan. 17th 1894.

TO ONE who has been impressed, through reading his personal letters, with the loneliness of the last years of Dr. Holmes's life, it is refreshing to find the above inscription in a copy of the first volume of the 1892 edition of his poems (David Douglas: Edinburgh, 1892, 4 vols.). A copy, thus inscribed, he sent in January 1894 to Ellen Terry at the Hotel Vendome in Boston as a gallant tribute to a great actress. That Ellen

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Terry was genuinely moved by the tribute is shown by her letter mailed the next day, January 18th. The letter, now in the Library of Congress, begins: "Oh, my dear Dr. Holmes I feel so grateful but I cannot *word* my gratitude — These delicious books! — and what you have written — for *ME* — just *me myself* and nobody else!"

The brief poem quoted above, with its attendant circumstances, repays consideration in other ways than in Ellen Terry's prompt and enthusiastic response. It was on October 7, 1894, that Holmes died. During the last years of his life his failing eyesight made him chiefly dependent upon a secretary for his writing. Where his own autograph appears — as in his many notes to his most sympathetic friend, Annie Fields — it is often weak, with omissions, shaky, not easily legible. In contrast, the autograph here is firm, clear, perfectly spaced and punctuated, making a most attractive inscription on the first leaf of the volume.

Just as there is a contrast between the usual autograph of his last years and the one here, so the precise, gallant verse, the last he is known to have written, is in sharp contrast to the picture of him we get through the many notes sent off to Annie Fields in the last years. (These letters are now in the Fields Collection of the Huntington Library, and I reproduce parts of three of them with the permission of the Library.) Though the letters are not dated as to year, two of them can be definitely placed in 1893, when, although Holmes was living in his own house at 296 Beacon Street with his son, Justice Holmes, and his son's wife, he sorely missed the tender feminine ministrations he had enjoyed through the long years; for after his wife's death in 1888, the same affectionate companionship had been faithfully and tenderly continued by his widowed daughter, Mrs. Turner Sargent, until her death in 1889.

I shall let the letters speak for themselves, for they are eloquent in their brevity, shakiness of writing, and flashes of the allusion and figure always characteristic of Holmes. On June 9th (probably 1893), he writes from 296 Beacon Street:

My dear Annie,

I am *longing* to see you. Every body is going and leaving me, and now you must be every body.

Read what Andromache says to Hector and then put me in petticoats and think of me as Andromache.

I write *Stans pede in uno* so as to get this into the box at once.

Write me a line — there's a good girl.

Affectionately

O W H.

On September 30th [1893], after a first paragraph telling of a satisfactory visit to Mrs. Ward, he writes:

Nothing of Miss Gaudelet yet. I am expecting her about the middle of the week. You don't know how lonely I feel — no club today everybody away that isnt dead or sick. Charles Storrow, my classmate is I suppose mentally ill. However I am too busy to mope, and if you were only back chirping like an autumn cricket.

I write to let you know I am alive and thinking of you — it is so dark (5.30 p.m.) I can hardly see letters —

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(I believe my pen was empty just now) but I meant you should have a line before Tuesday, — Can you read this? I can't. But never mind and you will write me at least a few words to keep me in heart till you come back and relieve my loneliness

Always affectionately Yours
O W H

On Thursday, October 26th [1893], there came to Mrs. Fields an even briefer appeal, eloquent of age by its omission and shaky writing:

My dear Annie,

I must see you and have another good talk, or I shall perish of soul stagnation and starvation.

When shall come? Shall it be about 12.30 on what day? Don't let me perish of mental inanition and sympathy famine!

Your always,
O W H.

These notes, for all their brevity and pathos of loneliness, speak vividly, and show that the spark still comes occasionally. But assuredly it shines with a clear light in the gracious gift to Ellen Terry: the verse written with his old precision and care as to accurate rhyme, and in language harking back to the time sixty years before when he was in Paris studying under Louis and when his letters to his father and mother often held snatches of French. As in the opening of a letter of September 3, 1834: "*Me voilà revenu!* Once more in the gay, the glorious city where I have past so many happy days." He states his familiarity with French in another letter, November 14, 1833: "I have learned the language and the people and the consequence is that I feel as much at home as if I were attending our old winter course in Boston." Not that he thought of himself as a poet in those days, as he says in a letter written about two weeks later: "I suppose if I should make verses nowadays (which Heaven forbid!) my readers would think I had not grown much the better poet for crossing the water." And even more firmly he announces his devotion to his chosen calling of medicine in a letter written October 22, 1834: "I have entirely relinquished the business of writing for journals and shall say No, though Minerva and Plato come hand in hand to tear me — the Cincinnatus of Science from the ploughtail she has commanded me to follow."

But for all these firm resolutions, he was so sharply impressed by the French *vers de société* that, sixty years later, when he writes a compliment, he turns with grace and ease to the language and form where he is still at home. Perhaps with a conscious return to the spirit of his own youth as he pays a chivalrous tribute of gift and verse to a famous actress of the day.

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OUR READERS COMMENT

On "The Humanities in the Americas"

To the Editor: I agree with Dr. Erskine completely that we have very much to learn from our fellow Americans to the south and also feel that we of the United States have altogether too great a smugness concerning our own material progress. Would that our philosophical and humanistic thinking were going forward at the same pace.

Many of us would like to read at least briefly if not extensively the best current thoughts and activities of our southern neighbors, but time and energy and language barriers make this either too difficult or impossible. The days and years are not long enough to carry on our normal activities and add the many worthwhile trains of thought which appeal.

The Reader's Digest is doing a great service to the United States and the world in printing its foreign language editions of our best magazine writers. As I understand, this was undertaken primarily as a service for the good of all and with an anticipated deficit of considerable size expected, though I believe some unexpected balance has accrued.

In the same spirit of progress, do you not believe that we of English-speaking North America would welcome a publication by *The Reader's Digest* of the best current work of our Central and South American neighbors? It seems to me that The Good Neighbor Policy would be materially assisted by a clearer and more widespread understanding of the South which such a publication would make possible in this country.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Wallace, Editor of *The Reader's Digest.*

WALTER M. BRANDOW
San Diego, California

On "Why 100,000,000 Americans Read Comics"

To the Editor: To the current conflict over the value of comics, William Moulton Marston has contributed another, but not a fresh, point of view.

There will be few to contest the author's statement that "pictures tell any story more effectively than words." There is, however, a sharp conflict of opinion over the present methods of employing the picture-story technique. Mr. Marston attempts to justify the "Superman" type of comics by telling us that they "satisfy the universal human desires and aspirations hidden customarily beneath long accumulated protective coverings of indirection and disguise." Nevertheless, he is forced to admit that his brands of "comics have many faults."

Mr. Marston has tried to "sell" worried parents on the harmlessness of the "Superman" type of comics by hinting that there are "don'ts" set up for writers and artists contributing to the comic books. The publicizing of these "don'ts" serves as pretty window dressing, but it is a fact that the "don'ts" are not lived up to by even the leading magazines in the field. The struggling magazines pay absolutely no attention to them. But parents, lulled into a feeling of security by "whitewashing" articles like Mr. Marston's, assume that all comic books are all right, and the fictional comics continue to violate their so-called standards. This creation of unwarranted parental confidence in the harmlessness of fictional comics is not the least of the evils that may flow from Mr. Marston's article.

Several years ago, Mr. George J. Hecht, President of The Parents' Institute, Inc., concluded that the prohibition of comics would be useless unless children were provided with other reading material that was attractive, interesting, worthwhile and capable of satisfying them. To this end he founded "True Comics," "Real Heroes," "True Aviation," and "Calling All Girls." These publications, although patterned closely after other comics in format and color, differ markedly in subject matter. With the exception of a few features in "Calling All Girls," every bit of material in these magazines is based on actual happenings, involving actual people, drawn from contemporary or historic events. These magazines now have a combined paid circulation of well over 1,750,000 per year, and some six thousand schools make use of them as supplementary reading. Guided by the slogan: "Truth is stranger and a thousand times more thrilling than fiction," The

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Parents' Institute hopes to undo some of the harm that has been done, while continuing to supply youngsters with the kind of reading they demand.

HAROLD C. FIELD
The Parents' Institute, Inc.

To the Editor:

This commentary should begin with a confession: we have always maintained a somewhat skeptical attitude toward the more learned publications. It has seemed to us that they are inclined to dwell in a sort of ivory tower, a palace of art, a gilded but somewhat chilly perch on a huge crag platform. We have, on the other hand, felt rather a preference for the cottage in the vale where we could entertain our friends. We have — shall we confess it? — even extended our suspicions toward THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, though those suspicions, we hasten to say, have been tempered by our devotion to Phi Beta Kappa.

The SCHOLAR has, of course, been a shade on the academic side; ruder observers have even characterized it as highbrow. Our anxiety to exempt the SCHOLAR from such censure has perhaps had in it a touch of the sentimental — a warm-hearted fault of which we are not ashamed. But in general we have been sound citizens; we have been unswervingly "modern"; we do not like to be "different" or highbrow. To be brutally frank about it, we believe that a little more standardization would iron out some of the rough spots of our academic and cultural terrain. Therefore, if we have refrained from encouraging outsiders in their attacks on the SCHOLAR for being "too bright and good for human nature's daily food," still we have had moments of uneasiness about it. After all, did not its name come from the apostle of a very dubious philosophy, transcendentalism? And have not some mistaken metaphysical friends of ours, whose errors we shall have to quote later, actually defended transcendentalism? Our readers will understand our hesitancies.

Our loyalty to Phi Beta Kappa, however, we must in fairness to ourselves reiterate, has never wavered. Nor has it been a fugitive and cloistered loyalty. 'Way back in the 'twenties we heard Clarence Cook Little publicly refer to Phi Beta Kappa as "nothing but an intellectual attic." To us, the remark was somewhat shocking, for we were then resplendent in new keys, and our novel sheen scarcely seemed comportable with an attic full of old trunks, old hats, old dime novels, and old comics. To have become laureate as a part of an academic housecleaning! But we shook off these perturbations: Little was only a cancer man, with more knowledge of brain tumors than brains. Still, you can comprehend the sort of sneer to which red-blooded Phi Beta Kappas have been exposed.

After these prefatory remarks, it is clear why the last issue of the SCHOLAR has given us a triumphant sense of loyalty vindicated. We refer particularly to Brother W. M. Marston's brilliant article, "Why 100,000,000 Americans Read Comics." Here is no ivory tower, no intellectual attic: here is the common touch: here the high realm of scholarship is married to daily actuality. In thus sensing and responding to the demands of the utilitarian, the SCHOLAR, we believe, has shown the way to a New Order in learned writing. Under such an influence, we can envisage vast changes in education, nay in society itself. How far will the New Order go?

But prophecy we must abjure, for we ourselves are of the positivist persuasion: we prefer facts, records, statistics. Therefore our most emphatic congratulation to Brother Marston must be, not a bone-crunching handshake and a warming backslap, but rather the publicizing of an experiment to which we were prompted by Brother Marston's discoveries. The sincerest flattery *is* imitation; the most lyrical commendation, facts which prove the case beyond gainsay.

"Research indicates" — and we quote with pride the author's knowing phrase — our own research indicates that Brother Marston's article contains a good deal more profit than meets the eye. This we sensed without empiric confirmation, for we were always impressed by the quotation of six and eight-digit figures. We are confirmed Gallupians: *vox populi, vox dei.* We could not contradict 100,000,000 Americans who are helping vote Brother Marston the best comics writer in the country. We enthusiastically agree with them. But we do not stop there; Brother Marston assigns himself too modest a role. For, good positivist that he is, he is more: he is poet as well: he has a soul (if he will pardon that relatively coarse term for the *psyche*). It shines through the cracks in the statistics like a good deed in a naughty world. Let us look at it.

Observe carefully the terms in which he describes "Wonder Woman," who has brought him fame, fortune, and a welcome place in the SCHOLAR. There are five significant passages in his legend of a good woman who, in some but not all ways, is reminiscent of Diana, who is partly derived from Cytherea, and who has also, with delightful fantasy, a touch of Mrs. Jiggs: (1) "the *allure* of a good and beautiful woman";

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(2) "an *alluring* woman stronger than themselves"; (3) "feminine tenderness and *allure*"; (4) "who *allures* us with the love appeal of a true woman"; (5) "feminine love *allure*." We should like to avoid the language of pedantry (we are sure Brother Marston will approve), but we can best analyze these passages by the use of research vocabulary. In these passages are a number of *variants* but only one *constant;* the former we can toss out, but the latter is the clue to the conscience of the comic king. Risking obviousness, we have italicized the constant: *allure*. There is the basic truth; Brother Marston, like the poet he is, has spoken better than he knew. And, like readers of poetry, we felt the pleasant warmth of discovery, the glow of knowledge, the tonic popping of eyes.

We dashed from emotions to use. If Brother Marston's creation could stupefy 100,000,000, maybe we could influence 100. We did! Coming from a scientist, the allure principle must be universally valid, we reasoned. We were right. Like Brother Marston, we are teachers; though we lack the *décor* for such experiment that Southern California doubtless affords, we have done our best among the bayous and amid the heart of many thousand mists.

We have applied Brother Marston's phrase "moral educational benefits for the younger generation." In all our classes we now have the aid of two alluring young things clad as "Wonder Woman." Part of the time they stand, gracefully poised, on either side of the lecture desk. At least once during each hour we pause while the two beauties do a modern dance routine, and you have no idea how it livens things up. Our class enrollments are truly marvelous. Our joint seminar in Vedic Mysticism has grown in size from two to 367. Who dares say that 367 American university students can be wrong?

The climax of each hour comes when our two lovelies reach over and tap us on the head with charming pearl-handled hammers, and as the bell of dismissal rings we fall cold (not really, of course). Thus is the enemy vanquished; thus do our Wonder Women add, to their allure and their altruistic homilies, a convincing demonstration of power. All in all, we have helped remove the shackles of MAN'S SUPERIORITY, PREJUDICE, AND PRUDERY from lovely woman. As for superiority: the students here voted forty-to-one for us in a popularity contest in which we ran against a professor who has been using male athletes to give gymnastic exhibits during his lectures.

We have already indicated that Brother Marston sheds light, not only on education, but also

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THE Humanities after the War

PREFACED BY THE EDITOR, NORMAN FOERSTER

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Freedom and the Liberal Arts

ROSCOE POUND:
The Humanities in an Absolutist World

NORMAN FOERSTER:
A University Prepared for Victory

THEODORE M. GREENE:
The Realities of our Common Life

ABRAHAM FLEXNER:
The Burden of Humanism

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on philosophy (*philosophia biou*, etc.). His soul (more scientifically, his normative insight) is at work, but without crass obscurantism, primitive mystery-mongering, or archaic supernaturalism. As Brother Marston properly points out, today even a not very bright child is skeptical of heaven and hell.

Our mistaken metaphysical friends have called this blasphemous — a charge which is, of course, nonsensical. But we can grasp, if not wholly appreciate, their "reaction." Once, indeed, Brother Marston's courageous statement would have shocked *us* — for heaven lies about us in our infancy. But the cooling shades of positivism are closing us off from the grim glare of superstition, and we hail our brother's facing of fact. If our more quickly modernized children ask, in that quaint metaphor derived from obsolete ritual, "Give us this day our daily bread," Brother Marston does not turn them off with a stone or the opium of the masses (the consolation of the tender-minded, as Brother Sidney Hook calls them). He gives them what they crave — heroics. This solution is ingenious, and altogether worthy of its author. He does not foist upon children the *supernatural*, but feeds them with the *superhuman*. Thus, like the good psychologist he is, he humors the vestiges of the old culture. But in place of the fantastic world of the supernatural, he redirects the child to a solid and credible world of supermen and superwomen. Now he is not merely substituting one myth for another, as an incautious reader (like our mistaken metaphysical friend) might feel. No, Brother Marston knows what he is doing. He is presenting a scientific world: radar and rocket ships are indeed realizing his modern myth. Superwoman offers no difficulties in a world of super-efforts, super-power, super-profits — now positivized so that we can take them with no fears, no terrors.

Brother Marston *has* succeeded in pouring new wine into old bottles. The old texts are retained, but the meanings are new. "And a little child shall lead them": most adults read comics. "The last shall be first": the Katzenjammer Kids make THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. "Thou best philosopher, thou eye among the blind": the child at funnies sees with naked vision the new morality, whereas Brother Marston has to *tell* us adults about it.

Further research in Brother Marston's article reveals the profits that we can derive from it in ethics. Do you want, he asks — and this blow caught us napping with a copy of Shakespeare's sonnets, relics of our pre-conversion days — do you want your child to "cultivate weakling's aims, sissified attitudes"? Horrid thought. We could see our kids, as Brother Marston so neatly categorizes them, seduced into learning to read and write, growing into little mollycoddles, no longer aspiring to be Napoleon or J. Edgar Hoover. No, a thousand times no. Yet later we find Brother Marston opining that "it's sissified, according to exclusively masculine rules, to be tender, loving, affectionate, and *alluring*" (our constant again). Now wait, we thought. What is Brother Marston doing here? Is he *for* sissification or *against* it? The earlier passage implies that he is against it. Yet here he includes among the sins of sissification being *alluring*, that bright particular jewel of the soul. Is Brother Marston caught in a contradiction? Again, no. Not he. No more than Houdini or Hegel. In his higher synthesis, Brother Marston is going to have it both ways. Sissy plus power. Admirable! There at last is an ethical code that is suitable for swift modern times, crushing the weak in its powerful sweet arms, but embracing almost destructively those who are able to accept its deep love.

We wish that we ourselves could go on to embrace modern times, to "cultivate the wish for power," to be "super-strong," to release the "power-producing desire." But our parents did not know the need of power-love to better the "chance your child has for self-advancement in the world," and so, as we have already admitted, we come but weakly into applied dynamism. But to aid us toward this goal, an artistic colleague (much impressed by Brother Marston's history of ideography) has set about the creation of a new comic, "Superprof, or, Fearless Fred, Ph.D." This record of a scholarly hero who puts all academic villains to flight will, we hope, strengthen our undeveloped will to power. But our ideographer-friend has read Brother Marston with precision: he knows, as do we, that Fearless Fred must be, not only powerful, but also benevolent and altruistic.

Now our mistaken metaphysical friends have here attempted to introduce the quite unnecessary question of the nature of power and benevolence — an instance of the kind of stumbling block constantly shoved into the path of progress by men who, we generously admit, are well meaning, but who are still, unfortunately, muddleheaded. Of course we have paid no attention to these metaphysicians, for everyone knows what benevolence is. And this common knowledge we have amplified with a profound psychological insight; namely, that to be benevolent and altruistic is to have power. Consciousness of one's own rectitude makes the pistons of progress pump merrily. Thus the exercise of power becomes benevolent

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and altruistic. It is psychological necessity: another modern victory over metaphysics. What a happy ethic! Joy Through Strength! We must be deeply grateful to Brother Marston for tapping the hidden forces that will move our lives toward greater success. The nutritive value of once-forbidden fruit has at last been set forth, and the mythical serpent in the Garden has a real rival — but a constructive rival.

Finally, there is the literary value of Brother Marston's piece. No journal could publish it without having a deep interest in words and their ways, nay, even in poetry. For Brother Marston is at heart a poet: beneath that pachydermatous positivism there beats a passion for the complexity, the duplicity of meaning which is the essence of poetic suggestiveness. But this praise of his critical work is no denigration of his critical achievement. Far from it. As a critic he has a power to astonish that will elicit more than attention from lucid readers. Take his remarks on Homer. Now, our mistaken metaphysical friends who dabble in criticism had thought that Homer was a rather sad-eyed spectator of a world in which good and evil are discouragingly mixed. They said people often misunderstood him, even ignored him. But now that Brother Marston has made clear the relationship between Homer and the quite intelligible Katzenjammer world, Homer will probably reach a new high in sales. What better test?

But to go back to Brother Marston as a poet. He shoves metaphors around with a more than Shakespearian zest. Comics, he says, "defy the limits of accepted fact and convention, thus amortizing to apoplexy the ossified arteries of routine thought." The vigorous concrete figure runs through the whole sentence: comics, that is, ideographs designed to tell a story which arouses the primitive emotions and printed by the four-color process, is here conceived to hurl, like some knight of old or the favorite of comics, Superman himself, a defiance at the limits of accepted fact and convention. For the timid reader the metaphorical vigor may seem unrestrained, even boisterous. The pedantic, like our mistaken metaphysical friends, will want to know how you can amortize anything but a debt, or how, granted that *amortize* literally means "put to death," mortgages can die of anything even so strenuous as apoplexy. The unimaginative will shudder at the violence of the construction, "amortize to apoplexy." How can one "put to death to apoplexy"? And what is it that is "amortized"? The "ossified arteries of routine thought." A solemn purist would doubtless wish to write "rupturing

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Daniel Gregory Mason

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John Erskine

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A Subscriber in Milwaukee, Wis.

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the arteries of routine thought." Granted, the metaphor is bold. But it is an Elizabethan boldness: only the overcautious and literalminded will see confusion.

Brother Marston is a daring poet, and like all daring poets he needs an imaginative reader to meet him halfway. Great poets, as Whitman said, need great audiences. We hope all our brothers and sisters of Phi Beta Kappa join us in endeavoring to provide fit audience for the following sustained metaphor:

> . . . the picture-story fantasy cuts loose the hampering debris of art and artifice and touches the tender spots of universal human desires and aspirations, hidden customarily beneath the long accumulated protective coverings of indirection and disguise.

Note that, rhythmically, the sentence itself sinuously curves through many a "winding bout of linked sweetness long drawn out." What emerges when the comic strips is the primitive human emotions in a g-string; it is, as Coleridge finely put it, "A sight to dream of, not to tell . . ."

Seriously, we feel that, though he is a stylist of uncommon refinement, Brother Marston ought to make, perhaps, some concessions to the reader for whose palate these metaphorical delicacies are too rare. We suggest, therefore, that in his next article he skip the "laryngial substitutes" altogether and give us the naked compelling stuff of the ideograph itself. Why not tell us more about the comics *by means of comics?* And if the editors of our respected magazine hesitate because the SCHOLAR lacks "zinc plates, and a four-color process," we here and now promise to purchase these for the SCHOLAR. We are sure that there are literally thousands of Phi Beta Kappas who will happily contribute their keys, if need be, to bring the power of the "visual image" to the aid of puny reason in the great fight to save the humanities to which we are all committed.

CLEANTH BROOKS
ROBERT B. HEILMAN
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

On "Of the Librarian's Education"

To the Editor: Mr. Hoole's article "Of the Librarian's Education" might do considerable harm if left unchallenged, though it has much of merit in it.

In general, the problem arises from two conflicting purposes. The first is that the person going into library work needs just as much general cultural education as possible. It is my own notion that persons going into library positions of real responsibility should have had, not only the usual four years with a degree, but some graduate work in a scholarly field, *before* they go to library school. Even then many "scholars" do not have the charming personality and gift of social conversation that Mr. Hoole admires. More important is their ability to work with others and get things accomplished.

But there is a very definite demand on the part of libraries everywhere that people coming out of library school should know something about the details of all the various aspects of library work. The schools have reduced the time on such technical details.

Library schools cannot make up the deficiencies in the background education that four years of college should give. Through artificial stimulation we have pitchforked into library work in the last ten or fifteen years a number of young fellows not adequately grounded in cultural subjects and impatient with all sorts of detail. But this does not justify the calamitous error of placing libraries in the hands of persons, no matter how attractive personally, who know nothing about the purposes, organization, and methods of library work. Such persons may be notable as scholars, but a careful study of the libraries committed to the care of several such men will show that though they are using their library positions to speak, write, and promote in their respective fields of learning, the library programs, performance, and results are far from what they should be.

The librarian is employed first of all to guide and develop the library. Scholarly interest and knowledge of books are fundamental, and Mr. Hoole is right in asserting that more librarians who aspire to top positions must underlay their technical knowledge with a far stronger foundation than many library school students have.

JOSEPH L. WHEELER
Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland

On "The Anglo-American Future"

To the Editor: I should certainly agree with Sir Frederick Whyte's main contention in his article published in your Summer number — namely, that the hope of world stability, at least in the European-Atlantic area, lies in American cooperation with Britain in the attempt to establish "an Anglo-Soviet-American effort to make peace and lay the foundations of security." Already a long step has been taken in that direction by the recent Moscow Agreement. This, however, does not of

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itself solve the problem. The Agreement to be effective needs the support of an intelligent public opinion in this country. There is little doubt that it has this support to a large degree. Yet there are still a considerable number of people who are at heart opposed to a real working arrangement between our country and its principal associates in the present war, chiefly because of blind hatred and suspicion of one or both of these allies. A large measure of responsibility for this situation lies at the door of our newspapers and periodicals. We have a number of widely circulated newspapers which engage in a peculiarly systematic and mendacious campaign of anti-Russian and anti-British propaganda. In addition, there are many of our most respectable journals which exhibit unwarranted hostility towards Great Britain or Russia or both.

A further obstacle in the way of a wholehearted support by our people of Anglo-Soviet-American collaboration is the theory that it involves the domination, by the three Powers, of the rest of the world. This theory is quite baseless. Not only is China associated with the three other states in the Pact of Moscow, but, in addition, the announced purpose of the new relationship established among the four governments is to assist in the formation of a general international organization open to "all peace-loving states." Again, in the case of the new United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, forty-three states are represented in the policy-making Council, though the Central Committee is restricted to representatives of the Big Four. The Wheat Council established in July 1942 is to represent eventually all "nations willing to participate which have a substantial interest in international trade in wheat." In the United Nations Food Conference of last spring and in the Interim Food Commission which succeeded it, the delegations from all the forty-three states were theoretically equal in power. All of this should demonstrate that the special relations established among the Big Four are intended to promote the growth of a general and ultimately a global organization, and that the grouping of the four Powers is for the purpose, not of dominating the future general organization, but of undergirding it and furnishing it with a leadership which will be essential in the opening stages of its activities. That such a grouping might abuse its power and assume a dominating role is of course a possibility, but this should be prevented by the good sense of the peoples of the Big Four.

If, then, there is to be the necessary popular support in this country for the system of collaboration of which Sir Frederick Whyte speaks, there is needed a changed attitude on the part of our press, and also among our politicians, who are almost as responsible for the dissemination of harmful propaganda as the press. A change in this direction seems to have set in as a result of the Moscow Conference. It is to be hoped that it may be permanent.

F. R. Flournoy
Emporia, Kansas

Our Authors

Professor of philosophy at Columbia, JOHN HERMAN RANDALL, JR., is "engaged on committees to liberate education from the classicists, the historians, the economists, the literary scholars and the fine arts people." He also helps to edit the *Journal of Philosophy* and the *Journal of the History of Ideas* and is chairman of the Conference on the Scientific Spirit and Democratic Faith, which will meet in May to consider "the whole question of Liberating Education." Professor Randall was for seven years a member of The American Scholar Editorial Board and has been a frequent contributor to the magazine, his most recent article being "The Paradox of Intellectual Freedom" (Winter 1939–40).

OTELIA CROMWELL, a graduate of Smith College, is a teacher in the public schools of the District of Columbia. Her published works include *Thomas Heywood — A Study in the Elizabethan Drama of Everyday Life* and, in collaboration with Lorenzo D. Turner and Eva B. Dykes, *Readings from Negro Authors for Schools and Colleges*. Miss Cromwell is also a contributor to the *English Journal* and the *Harvard Educational Review* and is now assembling data for a biography of Lucretia Mott.

B. H. HAGGIN, at present music critic of *The Nation*, has written also for *The Freeman*, *The New Republic*, and *Hound and Horn*, and was music critic of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* from 1934–37. He has lectured at the People's Institute in New York and at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. His article in this issue which grew out of an introductory talk for the freshmen whom he taught for a year at Queens College, will be the introductory section of a book, *Music for the Man who Enjoys Hamlet*, which is scheduled for publication in April. His other books are *Music on Records* and *A Book of the Symphony*.

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WILL GIBSON teaches music, does "rewrite work," and writes poetry that has been published in America and England. Two of the poems that are printed here are included in *Cross Section*, a collection edited by Edwin Seaver and released this month.

CARL J. HAMBRO was President of the Norwegian Parliament for the sixteen years before the German invasion in 1940. He was also head of the Conservative Party in Norway, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, president of the last Assembly of the League of Nations in 1939 (now chairman of its Supervisory Committee), and editor-in-chief of the leading conservative newspaper and of the leading humorous weekly of Norway. He has translated some fifty books from French and English and has published about twenty of his own. In America Dr. Hambro spends most of his time lecturing on problems of government and the new world order.

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER needs no introduction to American readers. Her most recent book (1943) is *Our Young Folks*, a report on the status of American youth based upon the author's personal observations and the factual findings of the American Council on Education's Youth Commission. Mrs. Fisher has served since 1939 as a member of the Book Committee of the Phi Beta Kappa membership quarterly, *The Key Reporter*, and was a contributor to the first issue of The American Scholar ("Scholars and the Great Böig").

Professor of fine arts at Wells College, WILLIAM SENER RUSK is also a member of the editorial board of *Parnassus*, a contributing editor to the *Dictionary of the Arts*, and a contributor of sketches to *Thieme-Becker Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon* and to *Dictionary of American Biography*. His published works include *William Henry Rinehart, Sculptor* (1939) and *Methods of Teaching the Fine Arts* (1935). In recent years he has been interested "in urging the duty of the liberal educator to stress the relationships between the basic categories of human experience — art, religion, and science — without relaxing the standards of rigorous thinking or thoroughness."

STEWART H. HOLBROOK settled down to free-lance writing after having had years of experience as cub reporter, member of a dramatic stock company, lumberjack, editor of a lumber trade paper, and columnist for an Oregon daily. In addition, Mr. Holbrook has lectured on Ameri-

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can historical subjects at Harvard and Boston University, has contributed to the *Dictionary of American History*, and has published several books. His study of American forest fires, *Burning an Empire*, was published last October and will be followed by a history of the United States, designed to show that "our standard historical characters received a lot of help in their achievements from persons unknown to the mass of Americans."

CARYL P. HASKINS is president of the Haskins Laboratories, Inc., in Schenectady, Boston, and New York, president of the National Photocolor Corporation in New York, director of the Schenectady Trust Company, assistant liaison officer of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, and a member of the executive committee of the Industrial Research Institute. In addition, he is a professor at Union College, a regular contributor to magazines, and the author of several books in his field — the best-known of which are *Of Ants and Men* (1939) and *The Amazon: The Life History of a Mighty River* (1943).

NORMAN FOERSTER is director of the School of Letters and professor of English at the University of Iowa. He is also a noted author and literary critic. Among his publications are *The American Scholar* (1929), *Toward Standards* (1931), and *The Future of the Liberal College* (1938).

PAUL R. HEYL, physicist for the United States Bureau of Standards, is the inventor (with L. J. Briggs) of the earth induction compass. He is also the author of a number of articles and books, including *The Common Sense of the Theory of Relativity* (1925), *Fundamental Concepts of Physics* (1926), and *The Philosophy of a Scientific Man* (1933).

The author of "Our Unknown Enemy" is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and has written for *The Key Reporter*. The Navy's request for anonymity must be respected by the magazine.

MIRIAM R. SMALL is a professor of English at Wells College where she has taught since 1927. Her articles have appeared in scholarly journals and her doctoral thesis was published in 1935 as one of the *Yale Studies in English* under the title, *Charlotte Lennox: An Eighteenth Century Lady of Letters*. Miss Small, since 1938, has been collecting the letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes and editing them for publication.

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